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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

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(51) International Patent Classification 6:		(1	1) International Publication Number:	WO 99/10498
C12N 15/52, 15/82, 15/11, 5/14, C12P 21/02, C12N 9/00, A01H 5/00	A2	(4	3) International Publication Date:	4 March 1999 (04.03.99)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US	(74) Agents: RAN, David, B. et al.; Darwin Building, 7100 N.W. 62nd Avenue, Johnston, IA 50131-1000 (US).			
(22) International Filing Date: 24 August 1998 (24.08.9	8)	:	
(30) Priority Data: 60/057,082 27 August 1997 (27.08.97) 09/076,851 12 May 1998 (12.05.98) (63) Related by Continuation (CON) or Continuation-in (CIP) to Earlier Applications US 60/057,0 Filed on 27 August 1997 (US 09/076,0 Filed on 12 May 1998 (n -Part 082 (Cl 27.08.9 851 (Cl)7) IP)	(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, ABY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IS, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, N patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, MI	, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, J, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian MD, RU, TI, TM), European DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF,
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(54) Title: GENES ENCODING ENZYMES FOR LIGN	IN BIC	SY	NTHESIS AND USES THEREOF	

(57) Abstract

The present invention provides methods and compositions relating to altering lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition of plants. The invention provides isolated nucleic acids and their encoded proteins which are involved in lignin biosynthesis. The invention further provides recombinant expression cassettes, host cells, transgenic plants, and antibody compositions.

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GENES ENCODING ENZYMES FOR LIGNIN BIOSYNTHESIS AND USES THEREOF

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TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates generally to plant molecular biology. More specifically, it relates to nucleic acids and methods for modifying the lignin content in plants.

10 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Differences in plant cell wall composition account for much of the variation in chemical reactivity, mechanical strength, and energy content of plant material. In turn, differences in chemical and mechanical properties of plant material greatly impact the utilization of plant biomass by agriculture and industry. One abundant component of many types of plant cells, and one which has garnered increasing attention because of its importance in plant utilization, are lignins.

Lignins are a class of complex heterpolymers associated with the polysaccharide components of the wall in specific plant cells. Lignins play an essential role in providing rigidity, compressive strength, and structural support to plant tissues. They also render cell walls hydrophobic allowing the conduction of water and solutes. Reflecting their importance, lignins represent the second most abundant organic compound on Earth after cellulose accounting for approximately 25% of plant biomass. Lignins result from the oxidative coupling of three monomers: coumaryl, coniferyl, and sinapyl alcohols. Variability in lignin structure is dependent, in part, upon the relative proportion of the three constitutive monomers.

The biosynthesis of lignins proceeds from phenylalanine through the phenylpropanoid pathway to the cinnamoyl CoAs which are the general precursors of a wide range of phenolic compounds. The enzymes involved in this pathway are phenylalanine ammonia-lyase (PAL), cinnamate-4-hydroxylase (C4H), 4-coumarate-3-hydroxylase (C3H), O-methyltransferase (OMT), ferulate-5-hydroxylase (F5H), caffeoyl-CoA 3-O-methyltransferase (CCoA-OMT), and 4-coumarate:CoA ligase (4CL). Whetten and Sederoff, *The Plant Cell*, 7: 1001-1013 (1995); Boudet and Grima-

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Pettenati, Molecular Breeding, 2:25-39 (1996).

The lignin specific pathway channels cinnamoyl CoAs towards the synthesis of monolignols and lignins. This pathway involves two reductive enzymes that convert the hydroxycinnamoyl-CoA esters into monolignols: cinnamoyl-CoA reductase (CCR), and cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase (CAD).

While lignins are a vital component in terrestrial vascular plants, they often pose an obstacle to the utilization of plant biomass. For example, in the pulp and paper industry lignins have to be separated from cellulose by an expensive and polluting process. Lignin content also limits the digestability of crops consumed by livestock. While reduction of lignin content for such applications is generally desirable, increasing lignin content in plant material intended as a chemical feedstock for production of phenolics, for use as a fuel source, or for improvement in agronomically desirable properties (e.g., standability) is also advantageous. Accordingly, what is needed in the art is the ability to modulate lignin content in plants. The present invention addresses these and other needs.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally, it is the object of the present invention to provide nucleic acids and proteins relating to lignin biosynthesis. It is an object of the present invention to provide antigenic fragments of the proteins of the present invention. It is an object of the present invention to provide transgenic plants comprising the nucleic acids of the present invention. Additionally, it is an object of the present invention to provide methods for modulating, in a transgenic plant, the expression of the nucleic acids of the present invention.

Therefore, in one aspect, the present invention relates to an isolated nucleic acid comprising a member selected from the group consisting of (a) a polynucleotide having at least 60% identity to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: -18 and 73-75, wherein the polypeptide when presented as an immunogen elicits the production of an antibody which is specifically reactive to the polypeptide; (b) a polynucleotide which is complementary to the polynucleotide of (a); and (c) a polynucleotide comprising at least 25 contiguous nucleotides from a polynucleotide of (a) or (b). In some embodiments, the polynucleotide has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:

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19-36 and 76-78. The isolated nucleic acid can be DNA.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to recombinant expression cassettes, comprising a nucleic acid as described, *supra*, operably linked to a promoter.

In some embodiments, the nucleic acid is operably linked in antisense orientation to the promoter.

In another aspect, the present invention is directed to a host cell transfected with the recombinant expression cassette as described, *supra*. In some embodiments, the host cell is a sorghum *bicolor*) or maize (*Zea mays*) cell.

In a further aspect, the present invention relates to an isolated protein comprising a polypeptide of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by the isolated nucleic acid referred to, *supra*. In some embodiments, the polypeptide has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:1-18 and 73-75.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to an isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide of at least 25 nucleotides in length which selectively hybridizes under stringent conditions to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78, or a complement thereof. In some embodiments, the isolated nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter.

In yet another aspect, the present invention relates to an isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide, the polynucleotide having at least 80% sequence identity to an identical length of a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78 or a complement thereof.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to an isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide having a sequence of a nucleic acid amplified from a Zea mays nucleic acid library using the primers selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 37-72 and 79-84, or complements thereof. In some embodiments, the nucleic acid library is a cDNA library.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to a recombinant expression cassette comprising a nucleic acid amplified from a library as referred to supra, wherein the nucleic acid is operably linked to a promoter. In some embodiments, the present invention relates to a host cell transfected with this recombinant expression cassette. In some embodiments, the present invention relates to a protein of the present invention which is produced from this host cell.

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In an additional aspect, the present invention is directed to an isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide wherein: (a) the polypeptide comprises at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from a first polypeptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS:1-18 and 73-75, wherein said polypeptide, when presented as an immunogen, elicits the production of an antibody which specifically binds to said first polypeptide; (b) the polypeptide does not bind to antisera raised against the first polypeptide which has been fully immunosorbed with the first polypeptide; (c) the polypeptide has a molecular weight in non-glycosylated form within 10% of the first polypeptide.

In a further aspect, the present invention relates to a heterologous promoter operably linked to a non-isolated polynucleotide of the present invention, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid amplified from a nucleic acid library.

In yet another aspect, the present invention relates to a transgenic plant comprising a recombinant expression cassette comprising a plant promoter operably linked to any of the isolated nucleic acids of the present invention. In some embodiments, the transgenic plant is *Zea mays*. The present invention also provides transgenic seed from the transgenic plant.

In a further aspect, the present invention relates to a method of modulating expression of the genes encoding the proteins of the present invention in a plant, comprising the steps of (a) transforming a plant cell with a recombinant expression cassette comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention operably linked to a promoter; (b) growing the plant cell under plant growing conditions; and (c) inducing expression of the polynucleotide for a time sufficient to modulate expression of the genes in the plant. In some embodiments, the plant is maize. Expression of the genes encoding the proteins of the present invention can be increased or decreased relative to a non-transformed control plant.

Definitions

Units, prefixes, and symbols may be denoted in their SI accepted form.

Unless otherwise indicated, nucleic acids are written left to right in 5' to 3' orientation;
amino acid sequences are written left to right in amino to carboxy orientation,
respectively. Numeric ranges are inclusive of the numbers defining the range. Amino

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acids may be referred to herein by either their commonly known three letter symbols or by the one-letter symbols recommended by the IUPAC-IUB Biochemical Nomenclature Commission. Nucleotides, likewise, may be referred to by their commonly accepted single-letter codes. The terms defined below are more fully defined by reference to the specification as a whole.

By "amplified" is meant the construction of multiple copies of a nucleic acid sequence or multiple copies complementary to the nucleic acid sequence using at least one of the nucleic acid sequences as a template. Amplification systems include the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) system, ligase chain reaction (LCR) system, nucleic acid sequence based amplification (NASBA, Cangene, Mississauga, Ontario), Q-Beta Replicase systems, transcription-based amplification system (TAS), and strand displacement amplification (SDA). See, e.g., Diagnostic Molecular Microbiology: Principles and Applications, D. H. Persing et al., Ed., American Society for Microbiology, Washington, D.C. (1993). The product of amplification is termed an amplicon.

The term "antibody" includes reference to antigen binding forms of antibodies (e.g., Fab, F(ab)₂). The term "antibody" frequently refers to a polypeptide substantially encoded by an immunoglobulin gene or immunoglobulin genes, or fragments thereof which specifically bind and recognize an analyte (antigen). However, while various antibody fragments can be defined in terms of the digestion of an intact antibody, one of skill will appreciate that such fragments may be synthesized de novo either chemically or by utilizing recombinant DNA methodology. Thus, the term antibody, as used herein, also includes antibody fragments such as single chain Fv, chimeric antibodies (i.e., comprising constant and variable regions from different species), humanized antibodies (i.e., comprising a complementarity determining region (CDR) from a non-human source) and heteroconjugate antibodies (e.g., bispecific antibodies).

The term "antigen" includes reference to a substance to which an antibody can be generated and/or to which the antibody is specifically immunoreactive. The specific immunoreactive sites within the antigen are known as epitopes or antigenic determinants. These epitopes can be a linear array of monomers in a polymeric composition - such as amino acids in a protein - or consist of or comprise a more

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complex secondary or tertiary structure. Those of skill will recognize that all immunogens (i.e., substance capable of eliciting an immune response) are antigens; however some antigens, such as haptens, are not immunogens but may be made immunogenic by coupling to a carrier molecule. An antibody immunologically reactive with a particular antigen can be generated *in vivo* or by recombinant methods such as selection of libraries of recombinant antibodies in phage or similar vectors. See, e.g., Huse et al., Science 246: 1275-1281 (1989); and Ward, et al., Nature 341: 544-546 (1989); and Vaughan et al., Nature Biotech. 14: 309-314 (1996).

As used herein, "antisense orientation" includes reference to a duplex polynucleotide sequence which is operably linked to a promoter in an orientation where the antisense strand is transcribed. The antisense strand is sufficiently complementary to an endogenous transcription product such that translation of the endogenous transcription product is often inhibited.

As used herein, "chromosomal region" includes reference to a length of chromosome which may be measured by reference to the linear segment of DNA which it comprises. The chromosomal region can be defined by reference to two unique DNA sequences, i.e., markers.

The term "conservatively modified variants" applies to both amino acid and nucleic acid sequences. With respect to particular nucleic acid sequences, conservatively modified variants refers to those nucleic acids which encode identical or conservatively modified variants of the amino acid sequences. Because of the degeneracy of the genetic code, a large number of functionally identical nucleic acids encode any given protein. For instance, the codons GCA, GCC, GCG and GCU all encode the amino acid alanine. Thus, at every position where an alanine is specified by a codon, the codon can be altered to any of the corresponding codons described without altering the encoded polypeptide. Such nucleic acid variations are "silent variations" and represent one species of conservatively modified variation. Every nucleic acid sequence herein which encodes a polypeptide also describes every possible silent variation of the nucleic acid. One of ordinary skill will recognize that each codon in a nucleic acid (except AUG, which is ordinarily the only codon for methionine) can be modified to yield a functionally identical molecule. Accordingly, each silent variation of a nucleic acid which encodes a polypeptide of the present invention is implicit in

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each described polypeptide sequence and incorporated herein by reference.

As to amino acid sequences, one of skill will recognize that individual substitutions, deletions or additions to a nucleic acid, peptide, polypeptide, or protein sequence which alters, adds or deletes a single amino acid or a small percentage of amino acids in the encoded sequence is a "conservatively modified variant" where the alteration results in the substitution of an amino acid with a chemically similar amino acid. Thus, any number of amino acid residues selected from the group of integers consisting of from 1 to 15 can be so altered. Thus, for example, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, or 10 alterations can be made. Conservatively modified variants typically provide similar biological activity as the unmodified polypeptide sequence from which they are derived. For example, substrate specificity, enzyme activity, or ligand/receptor binding is generally at least 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, or 90% of the native protein for it's native substrate. Conservative substitution tables providing functionally similar amino acids are well known in the art.

The following six groups each contain amino acids that are conservative substitutions for one another:

- 1) Alanine (A), Serine (S), Threonine (T);
- 2) Aspartic acid (D), Glutamic acid (E);
- 3) Asparagine (N), Glutamine (Q);
- 20 4) Arginine (R), Lysine (K);
 - 5) Isoleucine (I), Leucine (L), Methionine (M), Valine (V); and
 - 6) Phenylalanine (F), Tyrosine (Y), Tryptophan (W).

See also, Creighton (1984) Proteins W.H. Freeman and Company.

By "encoding" or "encoded", with respect to a specified nucleic acid, is meant comprising the information for translation into the specified protein. A nucleic acid encoding a protein may comprise non-translated sequences (e.g., introns) within translated regions of the nucleic acid, or may lack such intervening non-translated sequences (e.g., as in cDNA). The information by which a protein is encoded is specified by the use of codons. Typically, the amino acid sequence is encoded by the nucleic acid using the "universal" genetic code. However, variants of the universal code, such as is present in some plant, animal, and fungal mitochondria, the bacterium Mycoplasma capricolum (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. (USA), 82: 2306-2309 (1985)), or the

ciliate *Macronucleus*, may be used when the nucleic acid is expressed using these organisms.

When the nucleic acid is prepared or altered synthetically, advantage can be taken of known codon preferences of the intended host where the nucleic acid is to be expressed. For example, although nucleic acid sequences of the present invention may be expressed in both monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous plant species, sequences can be modified to account for the specific codon preferences and GC content preferences of monocotyledons or dicotyledons as these preferences have been shown to differ (Murray et al. Nucl. Acids Res. 17: 477-498 (1989)). Thus, the maize preferred codon for a particular amino acid may be derived from known gene sequences from maize. Maize codon usage for 28 genes from maize plants are listed in Table 4 of Murray et al., supra.

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As used herein "full-length sequence" in reference to a specified polynucleotide or its encoded protein means having the entire amino acid sequence of, a native (non-synthetic), endogenous, catalytically active form of the specified protein. A full-length sequence can be determined by size comparison relative to a control which is a native (non-synthetic) endogenous cellular form of the specified nucleic acid or protein. Methods to determine whether a sequence is full-length are well known in the art including such exemplary techniques as northern or western blots, primer extension, S1 protection, and ribonuclease protection. See, e.g., Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997). Comparison to known full-length homologous (orthologous and/or paralogous) sequences can also be used to identify full-length sequences of the present invention. Additionally, consensus sequences typically present at the 5' and 3' untranslated regions of mRNA aid in the identification of a polynucleotide as full-length. For example, the consensus sequence ANNNNAUGG, where the underlined codon represents the N-terminal methionine. aids in determining whether the polynucleotide has a complete 5' end. Consensus sequences at the 3' end, such as polyadenylation sequences, aid in determining whether the polynucleotide has a complete 3' end.

As used herein, "heterologous" in reference to a nucleic acid is a nucleic acid that originates from a foreign species, or, if from the same species, is substantially modified from its native form in composition and/or genomic locus by deliberate

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human intervention. For example, a promoter operably linked to a heterologous structural gene is from a species different from that from which the structural gene was derived, or, if from the same species, one or both are substantially modified from their original form. A heterologous protein may originate from a foreign species or, if from the same species, is substantially modified from its original form by deliberate human intervention.

By "host cell" is meant a cell which contains a vector and supports the replication and/or expression of the expression vector. Host cells may be prokaryotic cells such as *E. coli*, or eukaryotic cells such as yeast, insect, amphibian, or mammalian cells. Preferably, host cells are monocotyledonous or dicotyledonous plant cells. A particularly preferred monocotyledonous host cell is a maize host cell.

The term "hybridization complex" includes reference to a duplex nucleic acid structure formed by two single-stranded nucleic acid sequences selectively hybridized with each other.

By "immunologically reactive conditions" or "immunoreactive conditions" is meant conditions which allow an antibody, generated to a particular epitope, to bind to that epitope to a detectably greater degree (e.g., at least 2-fold over background) than the antibody binds to substantially all other epitopes in a reaction mixture comprising the particular epitope. Immunologically reactive conditions are dependent upon the format of the antibody binding reaction and typically are those utilized in immunoassay protocols. See Harlow and Lane, Antibodies, A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Publications, New York (1988), for a description of immunoassay formats and conditions.

The term "introduced" in the context of inserting a nucleic acid into a cell, means "transfection" or "transformation" or "transduction" and includes reference to the incorporation of a nucleic acid into a eukaryotic or prokaryotic cell where the nucleic acid may be incorporated into the genome of the cell (e.g., chromosome, plasmid, plastid or mitochondrial DNA), converted into an autonomous replicon, or transiently expressed (e.g., transfected mRNA).

The terms "isolated" refers to material, such as a nucleic acid or a protein, which is: (1) substantially or essentially free from components which normally accompany or interact with it as found in its naturally occurring environment. The

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isolated material optionally comprises material not found with the material in its natural environment; or (2) if the material is in its natural environment, the material has been synthetically (non-naturally) altered by deliberate human intervention to a composition and/or placed at a locus in the cell (e.g., genome or subcellular organelle) not native to a material found in that environment. The alteration to yield the synthetic material can be performed on the material within or removed from its natural state. For example, a naturally occurring nucleic acid becomes an isolated nucleic acid if it is altered, or if it is transcribed from DNA which has been altered, by non-natural, synthetic (i.e., "manmade") methods performed within the cell from which it originates. See, e.g., Compounds and Methods for Site Directed Mutagenesis in Eukaryotic Cells, Kmiec, U.S. Patent No. 5,565,350; *In Vivo* Homologous Sequence Targeting in Eukaryotic Cells; Zarling et al., PCT/US93/03868. Likewise, a naturally occurring nucleic acid (e.g., a promoter) becomes isolated if it is introduced by non-naturally occurring means to a locus of the genome not native to that nucleic acid. Nucleic acids which are "isolated" as defined herein, are also referred to as "heterologous" nucleic acids.

Unless otherwise stated, the term "lignin biosynthesis nucleic acid" means a nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide ("lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide") encoding a lignin biosynthesis polypeptide. A "lignin biosynthesis gene" refers to a non-heterologous genomic form of a full-length lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide.

As used herein, "localized within the chromosomal region defined by and including" with respect to particular markers includes reference to a contiguous length of a chromosome delimited by and including the stated markers.

As used herein, "marker" includes reference to a locus on a chromosome that serves to identify a unique position on the chromosome. A "polymorphic marker" includes reference to a marker which appears in multiple forms (alieles) such that different forms of the marker, when they are present in a homologous pair, allow transmission of each of the chromosomes in that pair to be followed. A genotype may be defined by use of one or a plurality of markers.

As used herein, "nucleic acid" includes reference to a deoxyribonucleotide or ribonucleotide polymer in either single- or double-stranded form, and unless otherwise limited, encompasses known analogues having the essential nature of natural nucleotides in that they hybridize to single-stranded nucleic acids in a

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manner similar to naturally occurring nucleotides (e.g., peptide nucleic acids).

By "nucleic acid library" is meant a collection of isolated DNA or RNA molecules which comprise and substantially represent the entire transcribed fraction of a genome of a specified organism. Construction of exemplary nucleic acid libraries, such as genomic and cDNA libraries, is taught in standard molecular biology references such as Berger and Kimmel, Guide to Molecular Cloning Techniques, Methods in Enzymology, Vol. 152, Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, CA (Berger); Sambrook et al., Molecular Cloning - A Laboratory Manual, 2nd ed., Vol. 1-3 (1989); and Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, F.M. Ausubel et al., Eds., Current Protocols, a joint venture between Greene Publishing Associates, Inc. and John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (1994 Supplement).

As used herein "operably linked" includes reference to a functional linkage between a promoter and a second sequence, wherein the promoter sequence initiates and mediates transcription of the DNA sequence corresponding to the second sequence. Generally, operably linked means that the nucleic acid sequences being linked are contiguous and, where necessary to join two protein coding regions, contiguous and in the same reading frame.

As used herein, the term "plant" includes reference to whole plants, plant organs (e.g., leaves, stems, roots, etc.), seeds and plant cells and progeny of same. Plant cell, as used herein includes, without limitation, seeds suspension cultures, embryos, meristematic regions, callus tissue, leaves, roots, shoots, gametophytes, sporophytes, pollen, and microspores. The class of plants which can be used in the methods of the invention is generally as broad as the class of higher plants amenable to transformation techniques, including both monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous plants. A particularly preferred plant is *Zea mays*.

As used herein, "polynucleotide" includes reference to a deoxyribopolynucleotide, ribopolynucleotide, or analogs thereof that have the essential nature of a natural ribonucleotide in that they hybridize, under stringent hybridization conditions, to substantially the same nucleotide sequence as naturally occurring nucleotides and/or allow translation into the same amino acid(s) as the naturally occurring nucleotide(s). A polynucleotide can be full-length or a subsequence of a native or heterologous structural or regulatory gene. Unless otherwise indicated, the

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term includes reference to the specified sequence as well as the complementary sequence thereof. Thus, DNAs or RNAs with backbones modified for stability or for other reasons are "polynucleotides" as that term is intended herein. Moreover, DNAs or RNAs comprising unusual bases, such as inosine, or modified bases, such as tritylated bases, to name just two examples, are polynucleotides as the term is used herein. It will be appreciated that a great variety of modifications have been made to DNA and RNA that serve many useful purposes known to those of skill in the art. The term polynucleotide as it is employed herein embraces such chemically, enzymatically or metabolically modified forms of polynucleotides, as well as the chemical forms of DNA and RNA characteristic of viruses and cells, including *inter alia*, simple and complex cells.

"polypeptide", The terms "peptide" and "protein" interchangeably herein to refer to a polymer of amino acid residues. The terms apply to amino acid polymers in which one or more amino acid residue is an artificial chemical analogue of a corresponding naturally occurring amino acid, as well as to naturally occurring amino acid polymers. The essential nature of such analogues of naturally occurring amino acids is that, when incorporated into a protein, that protein is specifically reactive to antibodies elicited to the same protein but consisting entirely of naturally occurring amino acids. The terms "polypeptide", "peptide" and "protein" are also inclusive of modifications including, but not limited to, glycosylation, lipid attachment, sulfation, gamma-carboxylation of glutamic acid residues, hydroxylation and ADPribosylation. Exemplary modifications are described in most basic texts, such as, Proteins -Structure and Molecular Properties, 2nd ed., T. E. Creighton, W. H. Freeman and Company, New York (1993). Many detailed reviews are available on this subject, such as, for example, those provided by Wold, F., Posttranslational Protein Modifications: Perspectives and Prospects, pp. 1-12 in Posttranslational Covalent Modification of Proteins, B. C. Johnson, Ed., Academic Press, New York (1983); Seifter et al., Meth. Enzymol. 182: 626-646 (1990) and Rattan et al., Protein Synthesis: Posttranslational Modifications and Aging, Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci. 663: 48-62 (1992). It will be appreciated, as is well known and as noted above, that polypeptides are not always entirely linear. For instance, polypeptides may be branched as a result of ubiquitination, and they may be circular, with or without branching, generally as a result of posttranslation events, including natural processing event and events brought about by human manipulation which do not occur · .WO 99/10498

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naturally. Circular, branched and branched circular polypeptides may be synthesized by non-translation natural process and by entirely synthetic methods, as well. Modifications can occur anywhere in a polypeptide, including the peptide backbone, the amino acid sidechains and the amino or carboxyl termini. In fact, blockage of the amino or carboxyl group 5 in a polypeptide, or both, by a covalent modification, is common in naturally occurring and synthetic polypeptides and such modifications may be present in polypeptides of the present invention, as well. For instance, the amino terminal residue of polypeptides made in E. coli or other cells, prior to proteolytic processing, almost invariably will be Nformylmethionine. During post-translational modification of the peptide, a methionine residue at the NH₂-terminus may be deleted. Accordingly, this invention contemplates the use of both the methionine-containing and the methionineless amino terminal variants of the protein of the invention. In general, as used herein, the term polypeptide encompasses all such modifications, particularly those that are present in polypeptides synthesized by expressing a polynucleotide in a host cell.

As used herein "promoter" includes reference to a region of DNA upstream from the start of transcription and involved in recognition and binding of RNA polymerase and other proteins to initiate transcription. A "plant promoter" is a promoter capable of initiating transcription in plant cells. Exemplary plant promoters include, but are not limited to, those that are obtained from plants, plant viruses, and bacteria which comprise genes expressed in plant cells such Agrobacterium or Rhizobium. Examples of promoters under developmental control include promoters that preferentially initiate transcription in certain tissues, such as leaves, roots, seeds, fibers, xylem vessels, tracheids, or sclerenchyma. Such promoters are referred to as "tissue preferred". Promoters which initiate transcription only in certain tissue are referred to as "tissue specific". A "cell type" specific promoter primarily drives expression in certain cell types in one or more organs, for example, vascular cells in roots or leaves. An "inducible" promoter is a promoter which is under environmental control. Examples of environmental conditions that may effect transcription by inducible promoters include anaerobic conditions or the presence of light. Tissue specific, tissue preferred, cell type specific, and inducible promoters constitute the class of "nonconstitutive" promoters. A "constitutive" promoter is a promoter which is active under most environmental conditions.

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The term "lignin biosynthesis polypeptide" refer to one or more amino acid sequences, in glycosylated or non-glycosylated form, involved in the lignin biosynthesis pathway. The term is also inclusive of fragments, variants, homologs, alleles or precursors (e.g., preproproteins or proproteins) thereof. A "lignin biosynthesis protein" comprises a lignin biosynthesis polypeptide.

As used herein "recombinant" includes reference to a cell or vector, that has been modified by the introduction of a heterologous nucleic acid or that the cell is derived from a cell so modified. Thus, for example, recombinant cells express genes that are not found in identical form within the native (non-recombinant) form of the cell or express native genes that are otherwise abnormally expressed, under expressed or not expressed at all as a result of deliberate human intervention. The term "recombinant" as used herein does not encompass the alteration of the cell or vector by naturally occurring events (e.g., spontaneous mutation, natural transformation/transduction/transposition) such as those occurring without deliberate human intervention.

As used herein, a "recombinant expression cassette" is a nucleic acid construct, generated recombinantly or synthetically, with a series of specified nucleic acid elements which permit transcription of a particular nucleic acid in a target cell. The recombinant expression cassette can be incorporated into a plasmid, chromosome, mitochondrial DNA, plastid DNA, virus, or nucleic acid fragment. Typically, the recombinant expression cassette portion of an expression vector includes, among other sequences, a nucleic acid to be transcribed, and a promoter.

The term "residue" or "amino acid residue" or "amino acid" are used interchangeably herein to refer to an amino acid that is incorporated into a protein, polypeptide, or peptide (collectively "protein"). The amino acid may be a naturally occurring amino acid and, unless otherwise limited, may encompass known analogs of natural amino acids that can function in a similar manner as naturally occurring amino acids.

The term "selectively hybridizes" includes reference to hybridization, under stringent hybridization conditions, of a nucleic acid sequence to a specified nucleic acid target sequence to a detectably greater degree (e.g., at least 2-fold over background) than its hybridization to non-target nucleic acid sequences and to the

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substantial exclusion of non-target nucleic acids. Selectively hybridizing sequences typically have about at least 80% sequence identity, preferably 90% sequence identity, and most preferably 100% sequence identity (i.e., complementary) with each other.

The term "specifically reactive", includes reference to a binding reaction between an antibody and a protein having an epitope recognized by the antigen binding site of the antibody. This binding reaction is determinative of the presence of a protein having the recognized epitope amongst the presence of a heterogeneous population of proteins and other biologics. Thus, under designated immunoassay conditions, the specified antibodies bind to an analyte having the recognized epitope to a substantially greater degree (e.g., at least 2-fold over background) than to substantially all other analytes lacking the epitope which are present in the sample.

Specific binding to an antibody under such conditions may require an antibody that is selected for its specificity for a particular protein. For example, antibodies raised to the polypeptides of the present invention can be selected from to obtain antibodies specifically reactive with polypeptides of the present invention. The proteins used as immunogens can be in native conformation or denatured so as to provide a linear epitope.

A variety of immunoassay formats may be used to select antibodies specifically reactive with a particular protein (or other analyte). For example, solid-phase ELISA immunoassays are routinely used to select monoclonal antibodies specifically immunoreactive with a protein. See Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies*, *A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Publications, New York (1988), for a description of immunoassay formats and conditions that can be used to determine selective reactivity.

The terms "stringent conditions" or "stringent hybridization conditions" includes reference to conditions under which a probe will hybridize to its target sequence, to a detectably greater degree than other sequences (e.g., at least 2-fold over background). Stringent conditions are sequence-dependent and will be different in different circumstances. By controlling the stringency of the hybridization and/or washing conditions, target sequences can be identified which are 100% complementary to the probe (homologous probing). Alternatively, stringency conditions can be adjusted to allow some mismatching in sequences so that lower degrees of similarity are

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detected (heterologous probing). Generally, a probe is less than about 1000 nucleotides in length, preferably less than 500 nucleotides in length.

Typically, stringent conditions will be those in which the salt concentration is less than about 1.5 M Na ion, typically about 0.01 to 1.0 M Na ion concentration (or other salts) at pH 7.0 to 8.3 and the temperature is at least about 30°C for short probes (e.g., 10 to 50 nucleotides) and at least about 60°C for long probes (e.g., greater than 50 nucleotides). Stringent conditions may also be achieved with the addition of destabilizing agents such as formamide. Exemplary low stringency conditions include hybridization with a buffer solution of 30 to 35% formamide, 1 M NaCl, 1% SDS (sodium dodecyl sulphate) at 37°C, and a wash in 1X to 2X SSC (20X SSC = 3.0 M NaCl/0.3 M trisodium citrate) at 50 to 55°C. Exemplary moderate stringency conditions include hybridization in 40 to 45% formamide, 1 M NaCl, 1% SDS at 37°C, and a wash in 0.5X to 1X SSC at 55 to 60°C. Exemplary high stringency conditions include hybridization in 50% formamide, 1 M NaCl, 1% SDS at 37°C, and a wash in 0.1X SSC at 60 to 65°C.

Specificity is typically the function of post-hybridization washes, the critical factors being the ionic strength and temperature of the final wash solution. For DNA-DNA hybrids, the T_m can be approximated from the equation of Meinkoth and Wahl, Anal. Biochem., 138:267-284 (1984): $T_m = 81.5 \, ^{\circ}\text{C} + 16.6 \, (\log M) + 0.41$ (%GC) - 0.61 (% form) - 500/L; where M is the molarity of monovalent cations, %GC is the percentage of guanosine and cytosine nucleotides in the DNA, % form is the percentage of formamide in the hybridization solution, and L is the length of the hybrid in base pairs. The T_m is the temperature (under defined ionic strength and pH) at which 50% of a complementary target sequence hybridizes to a perfectly matched probe. T_{m} is reduced by about 1 °C for each 1% of mismatching; thus, T_m, hybridization and/or wash conditions can be adjusted to hybridize to sequences of the desired identity. For example, if sequences with $\geq 90\%$ identity are sought, the T_m can be decreased 10 °C. Generally, stringent conditions are selected to be about 5 °C lower than the thermal melting point (T_m) for the specific sequence and its complement at a defined ionic strength and pH. However, severely stringent conditions can utilize a hybridization and/or wash at 1, 2, 3, or 4 °C lower than the thermal melting point (T_m); moderately stringent conditions can utilize a hybridization and/or wash at 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10 °C

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lower than the thermal melting point (T_m); low stringency conditions can utilize a hybridization and/or wash at 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, or 20 °C lower than the thermal melting point (T_m). Using the equation, hybridization and wash compositions, and desired T_m, those of ordinary skill will understand that variations in the stringency of hybridization and/or wash solutions are inherently described. If the desired degree of mismatching results in a T_m of less than 45 °C (aqueous solution) or 32 °C (formamide solution) it is preferred to increase the SSC concentration so that a higher temperature can be used. An extensive guide to the hybridization of nucleic acids is found in Tijssen, Laboratory Techniques in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology—Hybridization with Nucleic Acid Probes, Part I, Chapter 2 "Overview of principles of hybridization and the strategy of nucleic acid probe assays", Elsevier, New York (1993); and Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, Chapter 2, Ausubel, et al., Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995).

As used herein, "transgenic plant" includes reference to a plant which comprises within its genome a heterologous polynucleotide. Generally, the heterologous polynucleotide is stably integrated within the genome such that the polynucleotide is passed on to successive generations. The heterologous polynucleotide may be integrated into the genome alone or as part of a recombinant expression cassette. "Transgenic" is used herein to include any cell, cell line, callus, tissue, plant part or plant, the genotype of which has been altered by the presence of heterologous nucleic acid including those transgenics initially so altered as well as those created by sexual crosses or asexual propagation from the initial transgenic. The term "transgenic" as used herein does not encompass the

alteration of the genome (chromosomal or extra-chromosomal) by conventional plant breeding methods or by naturally occurring events such as random cross-fertilization, non-recombinant viral infection, non-recombinant bacterial transformation, non-recombinant transposition, or spontaneous mutation.

As used herein, "vector" includes reference to a nucleic acid used in transfection of a host cell and into which can be inserted a polynucleotide. Vectors are often replicons. Expression vectors permit transcription of a nucleic acid inserted therein.

The following terms are used to describe the sequence relationships

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between two or more nucleic acids or polynucleotides: (a) "reference sequence", (b) "comparison window", (c) "sequence identity", (d) "percentage of sequence identity", and (e) "substantial identity".

- (a) As used herein, "reference sequence" is a defined sequence used as a basis for sequence comparison. A reference sequence may be a subset or the entirety of a specified sequence; for example, as a segment of a full-length cDNA or gene sequence, or the complete cDNA or gene sequence.
- (b) As used herein, "comparison window" means includes reference to a contiguous and specified segment of a polynucleotide sequence, wherein the polynucleotide sequence may be compared to a reference sequence and wherein the portion of the polynucleotide sequence in the comparison window may comprise additions or deletions (i.e., gaps) compared to the reference sequence (which does not comprise additions or deletions) for optimal alignment of the two sequences. Generally, the comparison window is at least 20 contiguous nucleotides in length, and optionally can be 30, 40, 50, 100, or longer. Those of skill in the art understand that to avoid a high similarity to a reference sequence due to inclusion of gaps in the polynucleotide sequence a gap penalty is typically introduced and is subtracted from the number of matches.

Methods of alignment of sequences for comparison are well-known in the art. Optimal alignment of sequences for comparison may be conducted by the local 20 homology algorithm of Smith and Waterman, Adv. Appl. Math. 2: 482 (1981); by the homology alignment algorithm of Needleman and Wunsch, J. Mol. Biol. 48: 443 (1970); by the search for similarity method of Pearson and Lipman, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 85: 2444 (1988); by computerized implementations of these algorithms, including, but not limited to: CLUSTAL in the PC/Gene program by Intelligenetics, Mountain 25 View, California, GAP, BESTFIT, BLAST, FASTA, and TFASTA in the Wisconsin Genetics Software Package, Genetics Computer Group (GCG), 575 Science Dr., Madison, Wisconsin, USA; the CLUSTAL program is well described by Higgins and Sharp, Gene 73: 237-244 (1988); Higgins and Sharp, CABIOS 5: 151-153 (1989); Corpet, et al., Nucleic Acids Research 16: 10881-90 (1988); Huang, et al., Computer Applications in the Biosciences 8: 155-65 (1992), and Pearson, et al., Methods in Molecular Biology 24: 307-331 (1994). The BLAST family of programs which can be

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used for database similarity searches includes: BLASTN for nucleotide query sequences against nucleotide database sequences; BLASTX for nucleotide query sequences against protein database sequences; BLASTP for protein query sequences against protein database sequences; TBLASTN for protein query sequences against nucleotide database sequences; and TBLASTX for nucleotide query sequences against nucleotide database sequences. See, Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, Chapter 19, Ausubel, et al., Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995).

Unless otherwise stated, sequence identity/similarity values provided herein refer to the value obtained using the BLAST 2.0.1 suite of programs using default parameters. Altschul et al., Nucleic Acids Res. 25:3389-3402 (1997).

As those of ordinary skill in the art will understand, BLAST searches assume that proteins can be modeled as random sequences. However, many real proteins comprise regions of nonrandom sequences which may be homopolymeric tracts, short-period repeats, or regions enriched in one or more amino acids. Such low-complexity regions may be aligned between unrelated proteins even though other regions of the protein are entirely dissimilar. A number of low-complexity filter programs can be employed to reduce such low-complexity alignments. For example, the SEG (Wooten and Federhen, Comput. Chem., 17:149-163 (1993)) and XNU (Claverie and States, Comput. Chem., 17:191-201 (1993)) low-complexity filters can be employed alone or in combination.

(c) As used herein, "sequence identity" or "identity" in the context of two nucleic acid or polypeptide sequences includes reference to the residues in the two sequences which are the same when aligned for maximum correspondence over a specified comparison window. When percentage of sequence identity is used in reference to proteins it is recognized that residue positions which are not identical often differ by conservative amino acid substitutions, where amino acid residues are substituted for other amino acid residues with similar chemical properties (e.g. charge or hydrophobicity) and therefore do not change the functional properties of the molecule. Where sequences differ in conservative substitutions, the percent sequence identity may be adjusted upwards to correct for the conservative nature of the substitution. Sequences which differ by such conservative substitutions are said to have "sequence similarity" or "similarity". Means for making this adjustment are well-

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known to those of skill in the art. Typically this involves scoring a conservative substitution as a partial rather than a full mismatch, thereby increasing the percentage sequence identity. Thus, for example, where an identical amino acid is given a score of 1 and a non-conservative substitution is given a score of zero, a conservative substitution is given a score between zero and 1. The scoring of conservative substitutions is calculated, e.g., according to the algorithm of Meyers and Miller, Computer Applic. Biol. Sci., 4: 11-17 (1988) e.g., as implemented in the program PC/GENE (Intelligenetics, Mountain View, California, USA).

- (d) As used herein, "percentage of sequence identity" means the value determined by comparing two optimally aligned sequences over a comparison window, wherein the portion of the polynucleotide sequence in the comparison window may comprise additions or deletions (i.e., gaps) as compared to the reference sequence (which does not comprise additions or deletions) for optimal alignment of the two sequences. The percentage is calculated by determining the number of positions at which the identical nucleic acid base or amino acid residue occurs in both sequences to yield the number of matched positions, dividing the number of matched positions by the total number of positions in the window of comparison and multiplying the result by 100 to yield the percentage of sequence identity.
- (e) (i) The term "substantial identity" of polynucleotide sequences means that a polynucleotide comprises a sequence that has at least 70% sequence identity, preferably at least 80%, more preferably at least 90% and most preferably at least 95%, compared to a reference sequence using one of the alignment programs described using standard parameters. One of skill will recognize that these values can be appropriately adjusted to determine corresponding identity of proteins encoded by two nucleotide sequences by taking into account codon degeneracy, amino acid similarity, reading frame positioning and the like. Substantial identity of amino acid sequences for these purposes normally means sequence identity of at least 60%, more preferably at least 70%, 80%, 90%, and most preferably at least 95%.

Another indication that nucleotide sequences are substantially identical is if two molecules hybridize to each other under stringent conditions. However, nucleic acids which do not hybridize to each other under stringent conditions are still substantially identical if the polypeptides which they encode are substantially identical.

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This may occur, e.g., when a copy of a nucleic acid is created using the maximum codon degeneracy permitted by the genetic code. One indication that two nucleic acid sequences are substantially identical is that the polypeptide which the first nucleic acid encodes is immunologically cross reactive with the polypeptide encoded by the second nucleic acid.

(e) (ii) The terms "substantial identity" in the context of a peptide indicates that a peptide comprises a sequence with at least 70% sequence identity to a reference sequence, preferably 80%, more preferably 85%, most preferably at least 90% or 95% sequence identity to the reference sequence over a specified comparison window. Preferably, optimal alignment is conducted using the homology alignment algorithm of Needleman and Wunsch, *J. Mol. Biol.* 48: 443 (1970). An indication that two peptide sequences are substantially identical is that one peptide is immunologically reactive with antibodies raised against the second peptide. Thus, a peptide is substantially identical to a second peptide, for example, where the two peptides differ only by a conservative substitution. Peptides which are "substantially similar" share sequences as noted above except that residue positions which are not identical may differ by conservative amino acid changes.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

20 Overview

The present invention provides, *inter alia*, compositions and methods for modulating (i.e., increasing or decreasing) the total levels of proteins of the present invention and/or altering their ratios in plants. Thus, the present invention provides utility in such exemplary applications as improving the digestibility of fodder crops, increasing the value of plant material for pulp and paper production, improving the standability of crops, as well as for improving the utility of plant material where lignin content or composition is important, such as the use of plant lignins as a chemical feedstock, or the use of hyperlignified plant material for use as a fuel source. In particular, the polypeptides of the present invention can be expressed at times or in quantities which are not characteristic of non-recombinant plants.

The present invention also provides isolated nucleic acid comprising polynucleotides of sufficient length and complementarity to a lignin biosynthesis gene to

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use as probes or amplification primers in the detection, quantitation, or isolation of gene transcripts. For example, isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can be used as probes in detecting deficiencies in the level of mRNA in screenings for desired transgenic plants, for detecting mutations in the gene (e.g., substitutions, deletions, or additions), for monitoring upregulation of expression or changes in enzyme activity in screening assays of compounds, for detection of any number of allelic variants (polymorphisms) of the gene, or for use as molecular markers in plant breeding programs. The isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can also be used for recombinant expression of lignin biosynthesis polypeptides, or for use as immunogens in the preparation and/or screening of antibodies. The isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can also be employed for use in sense or antisense suppression of one or more lignin biosynthesis genes in a host cell, tissue, or plant. Attachment of chemical agents which bind, intercalate, cleave and/or crosslink to the isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can also be used to modulate transcription or translation. Further, using a primer specific to an insertion sequence (e.g., transposon) and a primer which specifically hybridizes to an isolated nucleic acid of the present invention, one can use nucleic acid amplification to identity insertion sequence inactivated lignin biosynthesis genes from a cDNA library prepared from insertion sequence mutagenized plants. Progeny seed from the plants comprising the desired inactivated gene can be grown to a plant to study the phenotypic changes characteristic of that inactivation. See, Tools to Determine the Function of Genes, 1995 Proceedings of the Fiftieth Annual Corn and Sorghum Industry Research Conference, American Seed Trade Association, Washington, D.C., 1995. Additionally, non-translated 5' or 3' regions of the polynucleotides of the present invention can be used to modulate turnover of heterologous mRNAs and/or protein synthesis. Further, the codon preference characteristic of the polynucleotides of the present invention can be employed in heterologous sequences, or altered in homologous or heterologous sequences, to modulate translational level and/or rates.

The present invention also provides isolated proteins comprising polypeptides including an amino acid sequence from the lignin biosynthesis polypeptides (e.g., preproenzyme, proenzyme, or enzymes) as disclosed herein. The present invention also provides proteins comprising at least one epitope from a lignin

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biosynthesis polypeptide. The proteins of the present invention can be employed in assays for enzyme agonists or antagonists of enzyme function, or for use as immunogens or antigens to obtain antibodies specifically immunoreactive with a protein of the present invention. Such antibodies can be used in assays for expression levels, for identifying and/or isolating nucleic acids of the present invention from expression libraries, or for purification of lignin biosynthesis polypeptides.

The isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can be used over a broad range of plant types, including species from the genera Cucurbita, Rosa, Vitis, Juglans, Fragaria, Lotus, Medicago, Onobrychis, Trifolium, Trigonella, Vigna, Citrus, Linum, Geranium, Manihot, Daucus, Arabidopsis, Brassica, Raphanus, Sinapis, Atropa, Capsicum, Datura, Hyoscyamus, Lycopersicon, Nicotiana, Solanum, Petunia, Digitalis, Majorana, Ciahorium, Helianthus, Lactuca, Bromus, Asparagus, Antirrhinum, Heterocallis, Nemesis, Pelargonium, Panieum, Pennisetum, Ranunculus, Senecio, Salpiglossis, Cucumis, Browaalia, Glycine, Pisum, Phaseolus, Lolium, Oryza, Zea, Avena, Hordeum, Secale, Triticum, Sorghum, Picea, and Populus.

Nucleic Acids

The present invention provides, *inter alia*, isolated nucleic acids of RNA, DNA, and analogs and/or chimeras thereof, comprising a lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide encoding such enzymes as: cinnamate-4-hydroxylase (C4H), 4-coumarate-3-hydroxylase (C3H), caffeic O-methyltransferase (C-OMT), ferulate-5-hydroxylase (F5H), caffeoyl-CoA 3-O-methyltransferase (CCoA-OMT), 4-coumarate:CoA ligase (4CL), cinnamoyl-CoA reductase (CCR), cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase (CAD), as well as diphenyl oxidase (DPO), a laccase involved in monomer polymerization.

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The lignin biosynthesis nucleic acids of the present invention comprise an isolated lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides which, are inclusive of:

- (a) a polynucleotide encoding a lignin biosynthesis polypeptide of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75 and conservatively modified and polymorphic variants thereof, including exemplary polynucleotides of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78;
- 30 (b) a polynucleotide which is the product of amplification from a Zea mays nucleic acid library using primer pairs from amongst the consecutive pairs from SEQ ID NOS: 37-72 and 79-84, which amplify polynucleotides having substantial

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identity to polynucleotides from amongst those having SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78;

- (c) a polynucleotide which selectively hybridizes to a polynucleotide of (a) or (b);
- (d) a polynucleotide having at least 60% sequence identity with polynucleotides of (a), (b), or (c);
 - (e) a polynucleotide encoding a protein having a specified number of contiguous amino acids from a prototype polypeptide, wherein the protein is specifically recognized by antisera elicited by presentation of the protein and wherein the protein does not detectably immunoreact to antisera which has been fully immunosorbed with the protein;
 - (f) complementary sequences of polynucleotides of (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e); and
 - (g) a polynucleotide comprising at least 15 contiguous nucleotides from a polynucleotide of (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), or (f).

A. Polynucleotides Encoding A Protein of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75 or Conservatively Modified or Polymorphic Variants Thereof

As indicated in (a), *supra*, the present invention provides isolated heterologous nucleic acids comprising a lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide, wherein the polynucleotide encodes a lignin biosynthesis polypeptide, disclosed herein in SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75, or conservatively modified or polymorphic variants thereof. Those of skill in the art will recognize that the degeneracy of the genetic code allows for a plurality of polynucleotides to encode for the identical amino acid sequence. Such "silent variations" can be used, for example, to selectively hybridize and detect allelic variants of polynucleotides of the present invention. Accordingly, the present invention includes polynucleotides of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78, and silent variations of polynucleotides encoding a polypeptide of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. The present invention further provides isolated nucleic acids comprising polynucleotides encoding conservatively modified variants of a polypeptide of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. Conservatively modified variants can be used to generate or select antibodies immunoreactive to the non-variant polypeptide. Additionally, the present invention further provides isolated nucleic acids comprising polynucleotides encoding one or

more polymorphic (allelic) variants of polypeptides/polynucleotides. Polymorphisms are frequently used to follow segregation of chromosomal regions in, for example, marker assisted selection methods for crop improvement. Exemplary polymorphisms are provided in Table I.

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TABLE I

SEQ. ID NO.: 20						
Position of Polymorphism						
At/Between Nucleotide No(s).	Codon No.	Polymorphic Yariants	Encoded Amino Acid(s)			
248	31	T, C	Leu			
376	141	A, C	Arg			
719	188	С, Т	Ala			
1169	338	T, C	Ile			
1431	426	A, C	Lys, Gln			
1454	433	A, C	Gly			
1613	486	T, C	Asp			
1820	555	G, C	Gln, His			
1846		A, G				
1851		C, G				
1859		A, G				
2021, 2022		G (Insertion)				
2075		T, C				

4-coumarate: CoA ligase is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 1, 2, and 3 which are encoded for by the nucleic acids of SEQ ID NOS:19, 20, and 21, respectively.

10 Caffeic O-methyltransferase (C-OMT) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 4, 5, 6, and 7 which are encoded for by the nucleic acids of SEQ ID NOS: 22, 23, 24, and 25, respectively.

Cinnamate-4-hydroxylase (C4H) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 8 and 9 which are encoded for by the nucleic acids of SEQ ID NOS: 26 and

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27, respectively.

Cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase (CAD) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 10, 11 and 12 which are encoded for by the nucleic acids of SEQ ID NOS: 28, 29, and 30, respectively.

Caffeoyl-CoA 3-O-methyltransferase (CCoA-OMT) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 13, 14, 15, and 74 which are encoded for by the nucleic acids of SEQ ID NOS: 31, 32, 33, and 77, respectively.

Cinnamoyl-CoA reductase (CCR) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NO: 34 which is encoded for by the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO: 16.

A partial sequence for ferulate-5-hydroxylase (F5H) is coded for by the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 35 which is encoded for by the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO: 17.

A partial sequence for diphenyl oxidase (DPO) is coded for by the polypeptides of SEQ ID NO: 36 which is encoded for by the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO:18.

Ferulate-5-hydroxylase (F5H) is coded for by the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 73 which is encoded for by the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO: 76.

Diphenyl oxidase (DPO) is coded for by the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 75 which is encoded for by the nucleic acid of SEQ ID NO:78.

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B. Polynucleotides Amplified from a Zea mays Nucleic Acid Library

As indicated in (b), supra, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotides are amplified from a Zea mays nucleic acid library. Zea mays lines B73, PHRE1, A632, BMS-P2#10, W23, and Mo17 are known and publicly available. Other publicly known and available maize lines can be obtained from the Maize Genetics Cooperation (Urbana, IL). The nucleic acid library may be a cDNA library, a genomic library, or a library generally constructed from nuclear transcripts at any stage of intron processing. Generally, a cDNA nucleic acid library will be constructed to comprise a majority of full-length cDNAs. Often, cDNA libraries will be normalized to increase the representation of relatively rare cDNAs. In preferred embodiments, the cDNA library is constructed mature lignified tissue such as root, leaf, or tassel tissue. The cDNA

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library can be constructed using a full-length cDNA synthesis method. Examples of such methods include Oligo-Capping (Maruyama, K. and Sugano, S. Gene 138: 171-174, 1994), Biotinylated CAP Trapper (Carninci, P., Kvan, C., et al. Genomics 37: 327-336, 1996), and CAP Retention Procedure (Edery, E., Chu, L.L., et al. Molecular and Cellular Biology 15: 3363-3371, 1995). cDNA synthesis is preferably catalyzed at 50-55°C to prevent formation of RNA secondary structure. Examples of reverse transcriptases that are relatively stable at these temperatures are SuperScript II Reverse Transcriptases (Life)

prevent formation of RNA secondary structure. Examples of reverse transcriptases that are relatively stable at these temperatures are SuperScript II Reverse Transcriptase (Life Technologies, Inc.), AMV Reverse Transcriptase (Boehringer Mannheim) and RetroAmp Reverse Transcriptase (Epicentre). Rapidly growing tissues, or rapidly dividing cells are preferably used as mRNA sources.

The polynucleotides of the present invention include those amplified using the following primer pairs:

SEQ ID NOS: 37 and 38 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:19;

15 SEQ ID NOS: 39 and 40 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:20;

SEQ ID NOS: 41 and 42 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:21;

SEQ ID NOS: 43 and 44 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:22;

SEQ ID NOS: 45 and 46 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:23;

SEQ ID NOS: 47 and 48 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:24;

25 SEQ ID NOS: 49 and 50 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:25;

SEQ ID NOS: 51 and 52 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:26;

SEQ ID NOS: 53 and 54 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:27;

SEQ ID NOS: 55 and 56 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:28;

SEQ ID NOS: 57 and 58 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:29;

SEQ ID NOS: 59 and 60 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:30;

5 SEQ ID NOS: 61 and 62 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:31;

SEQ ID NOS: 63 and 64 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:32;

SEQ ID NOS: 65 and 66 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:33;

SEQ ID NOS: 67 and 68 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:34;

SEQ ID NOS: 69 and 70 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:35;

15 SEQ ID NOS: 71 and 72 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:36.

SEQ ID NOS: 79 and 80 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:76.

SEQ ID NOS: 81 and 82 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:77.

SEQ ID NOS: 83 and 84 which yield an amplicon comprising a sequence having substantial identity to SEQ ID NO:78.

The present invention also provides subsequences of full-length nucleic acids. Any number of subsequences can be obtained by reference to SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78, and using primers which selectively amplify, under stringent conditions to: at least two sites to the polynucleotides of the present invention, or to two sites within the nucleic acid which flank and comprise a polynucleotide of the present invention, or to a site within a polynucleotide of the present invention and a site within the nucleic acid which comprises it. A variety of methods for obtaining 5' and/or 3' ends is well known in the art. See, e.g., RACE (Rapid Amplification of Complementary Ends) as described in Frohman, M. A., in PCR Protocols: A Guide to Methods and Applications, M. A. Innis, D. H. Gelfand, J. J. Sninsky, T. J. White, Eds.

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(Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, 1990), pp. 28-38.); see also, U.S. Pat. No. 5,470,722, and *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Unit 15.6, Ausubel, *et al.*, Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995). Thus, the present invention provides lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides having the sequence of the lignin biosynthesis gene, nuclear transcript, cDNA, or complementary sequences and/or subsequences thereof.

Primer sequences can be obtained by reference to a contiguous subsequence of a polynucleotide of the present invention. Primers are chosen to selectively hybridize, under PCR amplification conditions, to a polynucleotide of the present invention in an amplification mixture comprising a genomic and/or cDNA library from the same species. Generally, the primers are complementary to a subsequence of the amplicon they yield. In some embodiments, the primers will be constructed to anneal at their 5' terminal end's to the codon encoding the carboxy or amino terminal amino acid residue (or the complements thereof) of the polynucleotides of the present invention. The primer length in nucleotides is selected from the group of integers consisting of from at least 15 to 50. Thus, the primers can be at least 15, 18, 20, 25, 30, 40, or 50 nucleotides in length. A non-annealing sequence at the 5'end of the primer (a "tail") can be added, for example, to introduce a cloning site at the terminal ends of the amplicon.

The amplification primers may optionally be elongated in the 3' direction with additional contiguous nucleotides from the polynucleotide sequences, such as SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78, from which they are derived. The number of nucleotides by which the primers can be elongated is selected from the group of integers consisting of from at least 1 to 25. Thus, for example, the primers can be elongated with an additional 1, 5, 10, or 15 nucleotides. Those of skill will recognize that a lengthened primer sequence can be employed to increase specificity of binding (i.e., annealing) to a target sequence.

The amplification products can be translated using expression systems well known to those of skill in the art and as discussed, *infra*. The resulting translation products can be confirmed as polypeptides of the present invention by, for example, assaying for the appropriate catalytic activity (e.g., specific activity and/or substrate specificity), or verifying the presence of one or more linear epitopes which are specific

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to a polypeptide of the present invention. Methods for protein synthesis from PCR derived templates are known in the art and available commercially. See, e.g., Amersham Life Sciences, Inc, Catalog '97, p.354.

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5 C. Polynucleotides Which Selectively Hybridize to a Polynucleotide of (A) or (B)

As indicated in (c), supra, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotides selectively hybridize, under selective hybridization conditions, to a polynucleotide of paragraphs (A) or (B) as discussed, supra. Thus, the polynucleotides of this embodiment can be used for isolating, detecting, and/or quantifying nucleic acids comprising the polynucleotides of (A) or (B). For example, polynucleotides of the present invention can be used to identify, isolate, or amplify partial or full-length clones in a deposited library. In some embodiments, the polynucleotides are genomic or cDNA sequences isolated from a Zea mays nucleic acid library. Preferably, the cDNA library comprises at least 80% full-length sequences, preferably at least 85% or 90% full-length sequences, and more preferably at least 95% full-length sequences. The cDNA libraries can be normalized to increase the representation of rare sequences. Low stringency hybridization conditions are typically, but not exclusively, employed with sequences having a reduced sequence identity relative to complementary sequences. Moderate and high stringency conditions can optionally be employed for sequences of greater identity. Low stringency conditions allow selective hybridization of sequences having about 70% sequence identity and can be employed to identify orthologous or paralogous sequences.

D. Polynucleotides Having at Least 60% Sequence Identity with the Polynucleotides of (A), (B) or (C)

As indicated in (d), *supra*, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotides have a specified identity at the nucleotide level to a polynucleotide as disclosed above in paragraphs (A), (B), or (C). The percentage of identity to a reference sequence is at least 60% and, rounded upwards to the nearest integer, can be expressed as an integer selected from the group of integers consisting of from 60 to 99. Thus, for example, the

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percentage of identity to a reference sequence can be at least 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, or 95%.

Optionally, the polynucleotides of this embodiment will share an epitope with a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotides of (A), (B), or (C). Thus, these polynucleotides encode a first polypeptide which elicits production of antisera comprising antibodies which are specifically reactive to a second polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide of (A), (B), or (C). However, the first polypeptide does not bind to antisera raised against itself when the antisera has been fully immunosorbed with the first polypeptide. Hence, the polynucleotides of this embodiment can be used to generate antibodies for use in, for example, the screening of expression libraries for nucleic acids comprising polynucleotides of (A), (B), or (C), or for purification of, or in immunoassays for, polypeptides encoded by the polynucleotides of (A), (B), or (C). The polynucleotides of this embodiment embrace nucleic acid sequences which can be employed for selective hybridization to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of the present invention.

Screening polypeptides for specific binding to antisera can be conveniently achieved using peptide display libraries. This method involves the screening of large collections of peptides for individual members having the desired function or structure. Antibody screening of peptide display libraries is well known in the art. The displayed peptide sequences can be from 3 to 5000 or more amino acids in length, frequently from 5-100 amino acids long, and often from about 8 to 15 amino acids long. In addition to direct chemical synthetic methods for generating peptide libraries, several recombinant DNA methods have been described. One type involves the display of a peptide sequence on the surface of a bacteriophage or cell. Each bacteriophage or cell contains the nucleotide sequence encoding the particular displayed peptide sequence. Such methods are described in PCT patent publication Nos. 91/17271, 91/18980, 91/19818, and 93/08278. Other systems for generating libraries of peptides have aspects of both in vitro chemical synthesis and recombinant methods. See, PCT Patent publication Nos. 92/05258, 92/14843, and 96/19256. See also, U.S. Patent Nos. 5,658,754; and 5,643,768. Peptide display libraries, vectors, and screening kits are commercially available from such suppliers as Invitrogen (Carlsbad, CA).

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E. Polynucleotides Encoding a Protein Having a Subsequence from a Prototype Polypeptide and is Cross-Reactive to the Prototype Polypeptide

As indicated in (e), *supra*, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotides encode a protein having a subsequence of contiguous amino acids from a prototype lignin biosynthesis polypeptide. Exemplary prototype lignin biosynthesis polypeptides are provided in SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. The length of contiguous amino acids from the prototype polypeptide is selected from the group of integers consisting of from at least 10 to the number of amino acids within the prototype sequence. Thus, for example, the polynucleotide can encode a polypeptide having a subsequence having at least 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, or 50, contiguous amino acids from the prototype polypeptide. Further, the number of such subsequences encoded by a polynucleotide of the instant embodiment can be any integer selected from the group consisting of from 1 to 20, such as 2, 3, 4, or 5. The subsequences can be separated by any integer of nucleotides from 1 to the number of nucleotides in the sequence such as at least 5, 10, 15, 25, 50, 100, or 200 nucleotides.

The proteins encoded by polynucleotides of this embodiment, when presented as an immunogen, elicit the production of polyclonal antibodies which specifically bind to a prototype polypeptide such as, but not limited to, a polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide of (b), *supra*, or exemplary polypeptides of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. Generally, however, a protein encoded by a polynucleotide of this embodiment does not bind to antisera raised against the prototype polypeptide when the antisera has been fully immunosorbed with the prototype polypeptide. Methods of making and assaying for antibody binding specificity/affinity are well known in the art. Exemplary immunoassay formats include ELISA, competitive immunoassays, radioimmunoassays, Western blots, indirect immunofluorescent assays and the like.

In a preferred assay method, fully immunosorbed and pooled antisera which is elicited to the prototype polypeptide can be used in a competitive binding assay to test the protein. The concentration of the prototype polypeptide required to inhibit 50% of the binding of the antisera to the prototype polypeptide is determined. If the amount of the protein required to inhibit binding is less than twice the amount of the

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prototype protein, then the protein is said to specifically bind to the antisera elicited to the immunogen. Accordingly, the proteins of the present invention embrace allelic variants, conservatively modified variants, and minor recombinant modifications to a prototype polypeptide.

A polynucleotide of the present invention optionally encodes a protein having a molecular weight as the non-glycosylated protein within 20% of the molecular weight of the full-length non-glycosylated lignin biosynthesis polypeptides as disclosed herein (e.g., SEQ ID NOS:1-18 and 73-75). Molecular weight can be readily determined by SDS-PAGE under reducing conditions. Preferably, the molecular weight is within 15% of a full length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide, more preferably within 10% or 5%, and most preferably within 3%, 2%, or 1% of a full length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide of the present invention. Molecular weight determination of a protein can be conveniently performed by SDS-PAGE under denaturing conditions.

Optionally, the polynucleotides of this embodiment will encode a protein having a specific activity at least 20%, 30%, 40%, or 50% of the native, endogenous (i.e., non-isolated), full-length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide. Further, the proteins encoded by polynucleotides of this embodiment will optionally have a substantially similar apparent dissociation constant (K_m) and/or catalytic activity (i.e., the microscopic rate constant, k_{out}) as the native endogenous, full-length lignin biosynthesis protein. Those of skill in the art will recognize that $k_{\text{cat}}/K_{\text{m}}$ value determines the specificity for competing substrates and is often referred to as the specificity constant. Proteins of this embodiment can have a k_{out}/K_{m} value at least 10% of the non-isolated full-length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide as determined using the substrate of that polypeptide from the lignin biosynthesis specific pathways, supra. Optionally, the k_{cut}/K_{m} value will be at least 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, and most preferably at least 60%, 70%, 80%, 90%, or 95% the k_{car}/K_{m} value of the non-isolated, full-length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide. Determination of k_{cut} , K_m , and k_{cut}/K_m can be determined by any number of means well known to those of skill in the art. For example, the initial rates (i.e., the first 5% or less of the reaction) can be determined using rapid mixing and sampling techniques (e.g., continuous-flow, stopped-flow, or rapid quenching techniques), flash photolysis, or relaxation methods (e.g., temperature jumps) in conjunction with such exemplary methods of measuring as spectrophotometry,

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spectrofluorimetry, nuclear magnetic resonance, or radioactive procedures. Kinetic values are conveniently obtained using a Lineweaver-Burk or Eadie-Hofstee plot.

F. Polynucleotides Complementary to the Polynucleotides of (A)-(E)

As indicated in (f), *supra*, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotides are complementary to the polynucleotides of paragraphs A-E, above. As those of skill in the art will recognize, complementary sequences base-pair throughout the entirety of their length with the polynucleotides of (A)-(E) (i.e., have 100% sequence identity over their entire length). Complementary bases associate through hydrogen bonding in double stranded nucleic acids. For example, the following base pairs are complementary: guanine and cytosine; adenine and thymine; and adenine and uracil.

G. Polynucleotides Which are Subsequences of the Polynucleotides of (A)-(F)

As indicated in (g), *supra*, the present invention provides isolated nucleic acids comprising lignin biosynthesis polynucleotides, wherein the polynucleotide comprises at least 15 contiguous bases from the polynucleotides of (A) through (F) as discussed above. The length of the polynucleotide is given as an integer selected from the group consisting of from at least 15 to the length of the nucleic acid sequence from which the polynucleotide is a subsequence of. Thus, for example, polynucleotides of the present invention are inclusive of polynucleotides comprising at least 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60, 75, or 100 contiguous nucleotides in length from the polynucleotides of (A)-(F). Optionally, the number of such subsequences encoded by a polynucleotide of the instant embodiment can be any integer selected from the group consisting of from 1 to 20, such as 2, 3, 4, or 5. The subsequences can be separated by any integer of nucleotides from 1 to the number of nucleotides in the sequence such as at least 5, 10, 15, 25, 50, 100, or 200 nucleotides.

The subsequences of the present invention can comprise structural characteristics of the sequence from which it is derived. Alternatively, the subsequences can lack certain structural characteristics of the larger sequence from which it is derived. For example, a subsequence from a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide having at least one linear epitope in common with a prototype sequence, such as SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and

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73-75, may encode an epitope in common with the prototype sequence. Alternatively, the subsequence may not encode an epitope in common with the prototype sequence but can be used to isolate the larger sequence by, for example, nucleic acid hybridization with the sequence from which it's derived. Subsequences can be used to modulate or detect gene expression by introducing into the subsequences compounds which bind, intercalate, cleave and/or crosslink to nucleic acids. Exemplary compounds include acridine, psoralen, phenanthroline, naphthoquinone, daunomycin or chloroethylaminoaryl conjugates.

Construction of Nucleic Acids

The isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can be made using (a) standard recombinant methods, (b) synthetic techniques, or combinations thereof. In some embodiments, the polynucleotides of the present invention will be cloned, amplified, or otherwise constructed from a monocot. In preferred embodiments the monocot is *Zea mays*. Particularly preferred is the use of *Zea mays* tissue from root, leaf, or tassel.

The nucleic acids may conveniently comprise sequences in addition to a polynucleotide of the present invention. For example, a multi-cloning site comprising one or more endonuclease restriction sites may be inserted into the nucleic acid to aid in isolation of the polynucleotide. Also, translatable sequences may be inserted to aid in the isolation of the translated polynucleotide of the present invention. For example, a hexa-histidine marker sequence provides a convenient means to purify the proteins of the present invention. The nucleic acid of the present invention - excluding the polynucleotide sequence - is optionally a vector, adapter, or linker for cloning and/or expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention. Additional sequences may be added to such cloning and/or expression sequences to optimize their function in cloning and/or expression, to aid in isolation of the polynucleotide, or to improve the introduction of the polynucleotide into a cell. Typically, the length of a nucleic acid of the present invention less the length of its polynucleotide of the present invention is less than 20 kilobase pairs, often less than 15 kb, and frequently less than 10 kb. Use of cloning vectors, expression vectors, adaptors, and linkers is well known in the art. Exemplary nucleic acids include such vectors as: M13, lambda ZAP Express, lambda ZAP II, lambda gt10, lambda gt11, pBK-CMV, pBK-RSV, pBluescript II, lambda

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DASH II, lambda EMBL 3, lambda EMBL 4, pWE15, SuperCos 1, SurfZap, Uni-ZAP, pBC, pBS+/-, pSG5, pBK, pCR-Script, pET, pSPUTK, p3'SS, pOPRSVI CAT, pOPI3 CAT, pXT1, pSG5, pPbac, pMbac, pMC1neo, pOG44, pOG45, pFRTβGAL, pNEOβGAL, pRS403, pRS404, pRS405, pRS406, pRS413, pRS414, pRS415, pRS416, lambda MOSSlox, and lambda MOSElox. For a description of various nucleic acids see, for example, Stratagene Cloning Systems, Catalogs 1995, 1996, 1997 (La Jolla, CA); and, Amersham Life Sciences, Inc, Catalog '97 (Arlington Heights, IL).

10 A. Recombinant Methods for Constructing Nucleic Acids

The isolated nucleic acid compositions of this invention, such as RNA, cDNA, genomic DNA, or a hybrid thereof, can be obtained from plant biological sources using any number of cloning methodologies known to those of skill in the art. In some embodiments, oligonucleotide probes which selectively hybridize, under stringent conditions, to the polynucleotides of the present invention are used to identify the desired sequence in a cDNA or genomic DNA library. While isolation of RNA, and construction of cDNA and genomic libraries is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, the following highlights some of the methods employed.

20 A1. mRNA Isolation and Purification

Total RNA from plant cells comprises such nucleic acids as mitochondrial RNA, chloroplastic RNA, rRNA, tRNA, hnRNA and mRNA. Total RNA preparation typically involves lysis of cells and removal of proteins, followed by precipitation of nucleic acids. Extraction of total RNA from plant cells can be accomplished by a variety of means. Frequently, extraction buffers include a strong detergent such as SDS and an organic denaturant such as guanidinium isothiocyanate, guanidine hydrochloride or phenol. Following total RNA isolation, poly(A)⁺ mRNA is typically purified from the remainder RNA using oligo(dT) cellulose. Exemplary total RNA and mRNA isolation protocols are described in *Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual*, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997); and, *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, Ausubel, *et al.*, Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995). Total RNA and mRNA isolation kits are commercially

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available from vendors such as Stratagene (La Jolla, CA), Clonetech (Palo Alto, CA), Pharmacia (Piscataway, NJ), and 5'-3' (Paoli, PA). See also, U.S. Patent Nos. 5,614,391; and, 5,459,253. The mRNA can be fractionated into populations with size ranges of about 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 or 3.0 kb. The cDNA synthesized for each of these fractions can be size selected to the same size range as its mRNA prior to vector insertion. This method helps eliminate truncated cDNA formed by incompletely reverse transcribed mRNA.

A2. Construction of a cDNA Library

Construction of a cDNA library generally entails five steps. First, first strand cDNA synthesis is initiated from a poly(A)* mRNA template using a poly(dT) primer or random hexanucleotides. Second, the resultant RNA-DNA hybrid is converted into double stranded cDNA, typically by a combination of RNAse H and DNA polymerase I (or Klenow fragment). Third, the termini of the double stranded cDNA are ligated to adaptors. Ligation of the adaptors will produce cohesive ends for cloning. Fourth, size selection of the double stranded cDNA eliminates excess adaptors and primer fragments, and eliminates partial cDNA molecules due to degradation of mRNAs or the failure of reverse transcriptase to synthesize complete first strands. Fifth, the cDNAs are ligated into cloning vectors and packaged. cDNA synthesis protocols are well known to the skilled artisan and are described in such standard references as: Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997); and, Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, Ausubel, et al., Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995). cDNA synthesis kits are available from a variety of commercial vendors such as: Stratagene, and Pharmacia.

A number of cDNA synthesis protocols have been described which provide substantially pure full-length cDNA libraries. Substantially pure full-length cDNA libraries are constructed to comprise at least 90%, and more preferably at least 93% or 95% full-length inserts amongst clones containing inserts. The length of insert in such libraries can be from 0 to 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, or more kilobase pairs. Vectors to accommodate inserts of these sizes are known in the art and available commercially. See, e.g., Stratagene's lambda ZAP Express (cDNA cloning vector with 0 to 12 kb

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cloning capacity).

An exemplary method of constructing a greater than 95% pure full-length cDNA library is described by Carninci et al., Genomics, 37:327-336 (1996). In that protocol, the cap-structure of eukaryotic mRNA is chemically labeled with biotin. By using streptavidin-coated magnetic beads, only the full-length first-strand cDNA/mRNA hybrids are selectively recovered after RNase I treatment. The method provides a high yield library with an unbiased representation of the starting mRNA population. Other methods for producing full-length libraries are known in the art. See, e.g., Edery et al., Mol. Cell Biol., 15(6):3363-3371 (1995); and, PCT Application WO 96/34981.

A3. Normalized or Subtracted cDNA Libraries

A non-normalized cDNA library represents the mRNA population of the tissue it was made from. Since unique clones are out-numbered by clones derived from highly expressed genes their isolation can be laborious. Normalization of a cDNA library is the process of creating a library in which each clone is more equally represented.

A number of approaches to normalize cDNA libraries are known in the art. One approach is based on hybridization to genomic DNA. The frequency of each hybridized cDNA in the resulting normalized library would be proportional to that of each corresponding gene in the genomic DNA. Another approach is based on kinetics. If cDNA reannealing follows second-order kinetics, rarer species anneal less rapidly and the remaining single-stranded fraction of cDNA becomes progressively more normalized during the course of the hybridization. Specific loss of any species of cDNA, regardless of its abundance, does not occur at any Cot value. Construction of normalized libraries is described in Ko, Nucl. Acids. Res., 18(19):5705-5711 (1990); Patanjali et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. U.S.A., 88:1943-1947 (1991); U.S. Patents 5,482,685, and 5,637,685. In an exemplary method described by Soares et al., normalization resulted in reduction of the abundance of clones from a range of four orders of magnitude to a narrow range of only 1 order of magnitude. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA, 91:9228-9232 (1994).

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Subtracted cDNA libraries are another means to increase the proportion of less abundant cDNA species. In this procedure, cDNA prepared from one pool of mRNA is depleted of sequences present in a second pool of mRNA by hybridization. The cDNA:mRNA hybrids are removed and the remaining un-hybridized cDNA pool is enriched for sequences unique to that pool. See, Foote et al. in, Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997); Kho and Zarbl, Technique, 3(2):58-63 (1991); Sive and St. John, Nucl. Acids Res., 16(22):10937 (1988); Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, Ausubel, et al., Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995); and, Swaroop et al., Nucl. Acids Res., 19)8):1954 (1991). cDNA subtraction kits are commercially available. See, e.g., PCR-Select (Clontech).

A4. Construction of a Genomic Library

To construct genomic libraries, large segments of genomic DNA are generated by random fragmentation, e.g. using restriction endonucleases, and are ligated with vector DNA to form concatemers that can be packaged into the appropriate vector. Methodologies to accomplish these ends, and sequencing methods to verify the sequence of nucleic acids are well known in the art. Examples of appropriate molecular biological techniques and instructions sufficient to direct persons of skill through many construction, cloning, and screening methodologies are found in Sambrook, et al., Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, 2nd Ed., Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Vols. 1-3 (1989), Methods in Enzymology, Vol. 152: Guide to Molecular Cloning Techniques, Berger and Kimmel, Eds., San Diego: Academic Press, Inc. (1987), Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, Ausubel, et al., Eds., Greene Publishing and Wiley-Interscience, New York (1995); Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997). Kits for construction of genomic libraries are also commercially available.

A5. Nucleic Acid Screening and Isolation Methods

The cDNA or genomic library can be screened using a probe based upon the sequence of a polynucleotide of the present invention such as those disclosed herein. Probes may be used to hybridize with genomic DNA or cDNA sequences to isolate

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homologous genes in the same or different plant species. Those of skill in the art will appreciate that various degrees of stringency of hybridization can be employed in the assay; and either the hybridization or the wash medium can be stringent. As the conditions for hybridization become more stringent, there must be a greater degree of complementarity between the probe and the target for duplex formation to occur. The degree of stringency can be controlled by temperature, ionic strength, pH and the presence of a partially denaturing solvent such as formamide. For example, the stringency of hybridization is conveniently varied by changing the polarity of the reactant solution through manipulation of the concentration of formamide within the range of 0% to 50%. The degree of complementarity (sequence identity) required for detectable binding will vary in accordance with the stringency of the hybridization medium and/or wash medium. The degree of complementarity will optimally be 100 percent; however, it should be understood that minor sequence variations in the probes and primers may be compensated for by reducing the stringency of the hybridization and/or wash medium.

The nucleic acids of interest can also be amplified from nucleic acid samples using amplification techniques. For instance, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technology can be used to amplify the sequences of polynucleotides of the present invention and related genes directly from genomic DNA or cDNA libraries. PCR and other *in vitro* amplification methods may also be useful, for example, to clone nucleic acid sequences that code for proteins to be expressed, to make nucleic acids to use as probes for detecting the presence of the desired mRNA in samples, for nucleic acid sequencing, or for other purposes. Examples of techniques sufficient to direct persons of skill through *in vitro* amplification methods are found in Berger, Sambrook, and Ausubel, as well as Mullis *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,683,202 (1987); and, *PCR Protocols A Guide to Methods and Applications*, Innis *et al.*, Eds., Academic Press Inc., San Diego, CA (1990). Commercially available kits for genomic PCR amplification are known in the art. See, e.g., Advantage-GC Genomic PCR Kit (Clontech). The T4 gene 32 protein (Boehringer Mannheim) can be used to improve yield of long PCR products.

PCR-based screening methods have also been described. Wilfinger et al. describe a PCR-based method in which the longest cDNA is identified in the first step

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so that incomplete clones can be eliminated from study. *BioTechniques*, 22(3): 481-486 (1997). In that method, a primer pair is synthesized with one primer annealing to the 5' end of the sense strand of the desired cDNA and the other primer to the vector. Clones are pooled to allow large-scale screening. By this procedure, the longest possible clone is identified amongst candidate clones. Further, the PCR product is used solely as a diagnostic for the presence of the desired cDNA and does not utilize the PCR product itself. Such methods are particularly effective in combination with a full-length cDNA construction methodology, *supra*.

10 B. Synthetic Methods for Constructing Nucleic Acids

The isolated nucleic acids of the present invention can also be prepared by direct chemical synthesis by methods such as the phosphotriester method of Narang et al., Meth. Enzymol. 68: 90-99 (1979); the phosphodiester method of Brown et al., Meth. Enzymol. 68: 109-151 (1979); the diethylphosphoramidite method of Beaucage et al., Tetra. Lett. 22: 1859-1862 (1981); the solid phase phosphoramidite triester method described by Beaucage and Caruthers, Tetra. Letts. 22(20): 1859-1862 (1981), e.g., using an automated synthesizer, e.g., as described in Needham-VanDevanter et al., Nucleic Acids Res., 12: 6159-6168 (1984); and, the solid support method of U.S. Patent No. 4,458,066. Chemical synthesis generally produces a single stranded oligonucleotide. This may be converted into double stranded DNA by hybridization with a complementary sequence, or by polymerization with a DNA polymerase using the single strand as a template. One of skill will recognize that while chemical synthesis of DNA is limited to sequences of about 100 bases, longer sequences may be obtained by the ligation of shorter sequences.

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Recombinant Expression Cassettes

The present invention further provides recombinant expression cassettes comprising a nucleic acid of the present invention. A nucleic acid sequence coding for the desired polynucleotide of the present invention, for example a cDNA or a genomic sequence encoding a full length polypeptide of the present invention, can be used to construct a recombinant expression cassette which can be introduced into the desired host cell. A recombinant expression cassette will typically comprise a polynucleotide of

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the present invention operably linked to transcriptional initiation regulatory sequences which will direct the transcription of the polynucleotide in the intended host cell, such as tissues of a transformed plant.

For example, plant expression vectors may include (1) a cloned plant gene under the transcriptional control of 5' and 3' regulatory sequences and (2) a dominant selectable marker. Such plant expression vectors may also contain, if desired, a promoter regulatory region (e.g., one conferring inducible or constitutive, environmentally- or developmentally-regulated, or cell- or tissue-specific/selective expression), a transcription initiation start site, a ribosome binding site, an RNA processing signal, a transcription termination site, and/or a polyadenylation signal.

A plant promoter fragment can be employed which will direct expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention in all tissues of a regenerated plant. Such promoters are referred to herein as "constitutive" promoters and are active under most environmental conditions and states of development or cell differentiation. Examples of constitutive promoters include the cauliflower mosaic virus (CaMV) 35S transcription initiation region, the 1'- or 2'- promoter derived from T-DNA of Agrobacterium tumefaciens, the ubiquitin 1 promoter, the Smas promoter, the cinnamyl alcohol dehydrogenase promoter (U.S. Patent No. 5,683,439), the Nos promoter, the pEmu promoter, the rubisco promoter, the GRP1-8 promoter, and other transcription initiation regions from various plant genes known to those of skill.

Alternatively, the plant promoter can direct expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention in a specific tissue or may be otherwise under more precise environmental or developmental control. Such promoters are referred to here as "inducible" promoters. Environmental conditions that may effect transcription by inducible promoters include pathogen attack, anaerobic conditions, or the presence of light. Examples of inducible promoters are the Adh1 promoter which is inducible by hypoxia or cold stress, the Hsp70 promoter which is inducible by heat stress, and the PPDK promoter which is inducible by light.

Examples of promoters under developmental control include promoters that initiate transcription only, or preferentially, in certain tissues, such as leaves, roots, fruit, seeds, or flowers. The operation of a promoter may also vary depending on its location in the genome. Thus, an inducible promoter may become fully or partially

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constitutive in certain locations.

Both heterologous and non-heterologous (i.e., endogenous) promoters can be employed to direct expression of the nucleic acids of the present invention. These promoters can also be used, for example, in recombinant expression cassettes to drive expression of antisense nucleic acids to reduce, increase, or alter lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition in a desired tissue. Thus, in some embodiments, the nucleic acid construct will comprise a promoter functional in a plant cell, such as in *Zea mays*, operably linked to a polynucleotide of the present invention. Promoters useful in these embodiments include the endogenous promoters driving expression of a polypeptide of the present invention.

In some embodiments, isolated nucleic acids which serve as promoter or enhancer elements can be introduced in the appropriate position (generally upstream) of a non-heterologous form of a polynucleotide of the present invention so as to up or down regulate expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention. For example, endogenous promoters can be altered *in vivo* by mutation, deletion, and/or substitution (see, Kmiec, U.S. Patent 5,565,350; Zarling *et al.*, PCT/US93/03868), or isolated promoters can be introduced into a plant cell in the proper orientation and distance from a lignin biosynthesis gene so as to control the expression of the gene. Gene expression can be modulated under conditions suitable for plant growth so as to alter lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition. Thus, the present invention provides compositions, and methods for making, heterologous promoters and/or enhancers operably linked to a native, endogenous (i.e., non-heterologous) form of a polynucleotide of the present invention.

Methods for identifying promoters with a particular expression pattern, in terms of, e.g., tissue type, cell type, stage of development, and/or environmental conditions, are well known in the art. See, e.g., *The Maize Handbook*, Chapters 114-115, Freeling and Walbot, Eds., Springer, New York (1994); *Corn and Corn Improvement*, 3rd edition, Chapter 6, Sprague and Dudley, Eds., American Society of Agronomy, Madison, Wisconsin (1988). A typical step in promoter isolation methods is identification of gene products that are expressed with some degree of specificity in the target tissue. Amongst the range of methodologies are: differential hybridization to cDNA libraries; subtractive hybridization; differential display; differential 2-D gel

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electrophoresis; DNA probe arrays; and isolation of proteins known to be expressed with some specificity in the target tissue. Such methods are well known to those of skill in the art. Commercially available products for identifying promoters are known in the art such as Clontech's (Palo Alto, CA) Universal GenomeWalker Kit.

For the protein-based methods, it is helpful to obtain the amino acid sequence for at least a portion of the identified protein, and then to use the protein sequence as the basis for preparing a nucleic acid that can be used as a probe to identify either genomic DNA directly, or preferably, to identify a cDNA clone from a library prepared from the target tissue. Once such a cDNA clone has been identified, that sequence can be used to identify the sequence at the 5' end of the transcript of the indicated gene. For differential hybridization, subtractive hybridization and differential display, the nucleic acid sequence identified as enriched in the target tissue is used to identify the sequence at the 5' end of the transcript of the indicated gene. Once such sequences are identified, starting either from protein sequences or nucleic acid sequences, any of these sequences identified as being from the gene transcript can be used to screen a genomic library prepared from the target organism. Methods for identifying and confirming the transcriptional start site are well known in the art.

In the process of isolating promoters expressed under particular environmental conditions or stresses, or in specific tissues, or at particular developmental stages, a number of genes are identified that are expressed under the desired circumstances, in the desired tissue, or at the desired stage. Further analysis will reveal expression of each particular gene in one or more other tissues of the plant. One can identify a promoter with activity in the desired tissue or condition but that do not have activity in any other common tissue.

To identify the promoter sequence, the 5' portions of the clones described here are analyzed for sequences characteristic of promoter sequences. For instance, promoter sequence elements include the TATA box consensus sequence (TATAAT), which is usually an AT-rich stretch of 5-10 bp located approximately 20 to 40 base pairs upstream of the transcription start site. Identification of the TATA box is well known in the art. For example, one way to predict the location of this element is to identify the transcription start site using standard RNA-mapping techniques such as primer extension, S1 analysis, and/or RNase protection. To confirm the presence of

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the AT-rich sequence, a structure-function analysis can be performed involving mutagenesis of the putative region and quantification of the mutation's effect on expression of a linked downstream reporter gene. See, e.g., *The Maize Handbook*, Chapter 114, Freeling and Walbot, Eds., Springer, New York, (1994).

In plants, further upstream from the TATA box, at positions -80 to -100, there is typically a promoter element (i.e., the CAAT box) with a series of adenines surrounding the trinucleotide G (or T) N G. J. Messing et al., in Genetic Engineering in Plants, Kosage, Meredith and Hollaender, Eds., pp. 221-227 1983. In maize, there is no well conserved CAAT box but there are several short, conserved protein-binding motifs upstream of the TATA box. These include motifs for the trans-acting transcription factors involved in light regulation, anaerobic induction, hormonal regulation, or anthocyanin biosynthesis, as appropriate for each gene.

Once promoter and/or gene sequences are known, a region of suitable size is selected from the genomic DNA that is 5' to the transcriptional start, or the translational start site, and such sequences are then linked to a coding sequence. If the transcriptional start site is used as the point of fusion, any of a number of possible 5' untranslated regions can be used in between the transcriptional start site and the partial coding sequence. If the translational start site at the 3' end of the specific promoter is used, then it is linked directly to the methionine start codon of a coding sequence.

If polypeptide expression is desired, it is generally desirable to include a polyadenylation region at the 3'-end of a polynucleotide coding region. The polyadenylation region can be derived from the natural gene, from a variety of other plant genes, or from T-DNA. The 3' end sequence to be added can be derived from, for example, the nopaline synthase or octopine synthase genes, or alternatively from another plant gene, or less preferably from any other eukaryotic gene.

An intron sequence can be added to the 5' untranslated region or the coding sequence of the partial coding sequence to increase the amount of the mature message that accumulates in the cytosol. Inclusion of a spliceable intron in the transcription unit in both plant and animal expression constructs has been shown to increase gene expression at both the mRNA and protein levels up to 1000-fold. Buchman and Berg, *Mol. Cell Biol.* 8: 4395-4405 (1988); Callis *et al.*, *Genes Dev.* 1: 1183-1200 (1987). Such intron enhancement of gene expression is typically greatest

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when placed near the 5' end of the transcription unit. Use of maize introns Adh1-S intron 1, 2, and 6, the Bronze-1 intron are known in the art. See generally, *The Maize Handbook*, Chapter 116, Freeling and Walbot, Eds., Springer, New York (1994).

The vector comprising the sequences from a polynucleotide of the present invention will typically comprise a marker gene which confers a selectable phenotype on plant cells. Usually, the selectable marker gene will encode antibiotic resistance, with suitable genes including genes coding for resistance to the antibiotic spectinomycin (e.g., the aada gene), the streptomycin phosphotransferase (SPT) gene coding for streptomycin resistance, the neomycin phosphotransferase (NPTII) gene encoding kanamycin or geneticin resistance, the hygromycin phosphotransferase (HPT) gene coding for hygromycin resistance, genes coding for resistance to herbicides which act to inhibit the action of acetolactate synthase (ALS), in particular the sulfonylurea-type herbicides (e.g., the acetolactate synthase (ALS) gene containing mutations leading to such resistance in particular the S4 and/or Hra mutations), genes coding for resistance to herbicides which act to inhibit action of glutamine synthase, such as phosphinothricin or basta (e.g., the bar gene), or other such genes known in the art. The bar gene encodes resistance to the herbicide basta, the nptII gene encodes resistance to the antibiotics kanamycin and geneticin, and the ALS gene encodes resistance to the herbicide chlorsulfuron.

Typical vectors useful for expression of genes in higher plants are well known in the art and include vectors derived from the tumor-inducing (Ti) plasmid of Agrobacterium tumefaciens described by Rogers et al., Meth. In Enzymol., 153:253-277 (1987). These vectors are plant integrating vectors in that on transformation, the vectors integrate a portion of vector DNA into the genome of the host plant. Exemplary A. tumefaciens vectors useful herein are plasmids pKYLX6 and pKYLX7 of Schardl et al., Gene, 61:1-11 (1987) and Berger et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A., 86:8402-8406 (1989). Another useful vector herein is plasmid pBI101.2 that is available from Clontech Laboratories, Inc. (Palo Alto, CA).

A polynucleotide of the present invention can be expressed in either sense or anti-sense orientation as desired. It will be appreciated that control of gene expression in either sense or anti-sense orientation can have a direct impact on the observable plant characteristics. Antisense technology can be conveniently used to gene

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expression in plants. To accomplish this, a nucleic acid segment from the desired gene is cloned and operably linked to a promoter such that the anti-sense strand of RNA will be transcribed. The construct is then transformed into plants and the antisense strand of RNA is produced. In plant cells, it has been shown that antisense RNA inhibits gene expression by preventing the accumulation of mRNA which encodes the enzyme of interest, see, e.g., Sheehy et al., Proc. Nat'l. Acad. Sci. (USA) 85: 8805-8809 (1988); and Hiatt et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,801,340.

Another method of suppression is sense suppression. Introduction of nucleic acid configured in the sense orientation has been shown to be an effective means by which to block the transcription of target genes. For an example of the use of this method to modulate expression of endogenous genes see, Napoli *et al.*, *The Plant Cell* 2: 279-289 (1990) and U.S. Patent No. 5,034,323.

Catalytic RNA molecules or ribozymes can also be used to inhibit expression of plant genes. It is possible to design ribozymes that specifically pair with virtually any target RNA and cleave the phosphodiester backbone at a specific location, thereby functionally inactivating the target RNA. In carrying out this cleavage, the ribozyme is not itself altered, and is thus capable of recycling and cleaving other molecules, making it a true enzyme. The inclusion of ribozyme sequences within antisense RNAs confers RNA-cleaving activity upon them, thereby increasing the activity of the constructs. The design and use of target RNA-specific ribozymes is described in Haseloff et al., Nature 334: 585-591 (1988).

A variety of cross-linking agents, alkylating agents and radical generating species as pendant groups on polynucleotides of the present invention can be used to bind, label, detect, and/or cleave nucleic acids. For example, Vlassov, V. V., et al., Nucleic Acids Res (1986) 14:4065-4076, describe covalent bonding of a single-stranded DNA fragment with alkylating derivatives of nucleotides complementary to target sequences. A report of similar work by the same group is that by Knorre, D. G., et al., Biochimie (1985) 67:785-789. Iverson and Dervan also showed sequence-specific cleavage of single-stranded DNA mediated by incorporation of a modified nucleotide which was capable of activating cleavage (J Am Chem Soc (1987) 109:1241-1243). Meyer, R. B., et al., J Am Chem Soc (1989) 111:8517-8519, effect covalent crosslinking to a target nucleotide using an alkylating agent complementary to the single-stranded

target nucleotide sequence. A photoactivated crosslinking to single-stranded oligonucleotides mediated by psoralen was disclosed by Lee, B. L., et al., Biochemistry (1988) 27:3197-3203. Use of crosslinking in triple-helix forming probes was also disclosed by Home, et al., J Am Chem Soc (1990) 112:2435-2437. Use of N4, N4-ethanocytosine as an alkylating agent to crosslink to single-stranded oligonucleotides has also been described by Webb and Matteucci, J Am Chem Soc (1986) 108:2764-2765; Nucleic Acids Res (1986) 14:7661-7674; Feteritz et al., J. Am. Chem. Soc. 113:4000 (1991). Various compounds to bind, detect, label, and/or cleave nucleic acids are known in the art. See, for example, U.S. Patent Nos. 5,543,507; 5,672,593; 5,484,908; 5,256,648; and, 5,681941.

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Proteins

The isolated proteins of the present invention comprise a polypeptide having at least 10 amino acids encoded by any one of the polynucleotides of the present invention as discussed more fully, *supra*, or polypeptides which are conservatively modified variants thereof. Exemplary polypeptide sequences are provided in SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. The proteins of the present invention or variants thereof can comprise any number of contiguous amino acid residues from a polypeptide of the present invention, wherein that number is selected from the group of integers consisting of from 10 to the number of residues in a full-length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide. Optionally, this subsequence of contiguous amino acids is at least 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, or 40 amino acids in length, often at least 50, 60, 70, 80, or 90 amino acids in length. Further, the number of such subsequences can be any integer selected from the group consisting of from 1 to 20, such as 2, 3, 4, or 5.

As those of skill will appreciate, the present invention includes catalytically active polypeptides of the present invention (i.e., enzymes). Catalytically active polypeptides have a specific activity at least 20%, 30%, or 40%, and preferably at least 50%, 60%, or 70%, and most preferably at least 80%, 90%, or 95% that of the native (non-synthetic), endogenous polypeptide. Further, the substrate specificity (k_{car}/K_m) is optionally substantially similar to the native (non-synthetic), endogenous polypeptide. Typically, the K_m will be at least 30%, 40%, or 50%, that of the native (non-synthetic), endogenous polypeptide; and more preferably at least 60%, 70%, 80%, or 90%. Methods of assaying and quantifying measures of enzymatic activity and

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substrate specificity (k_{ou}/K_m), are well known to those of skill in the art.

Generally, the proteins of the present invention will, when presented as an immunogen, elicit production of an antibody specifically reactive to a polypeptide of the present invention encoded by a polynucleotide of the present invention as described, supra. Exemplary polypeptides include those which are full-length, such as those disclosed in SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75. Further, the proteins of the present invention will not bind to antisera raised against a polypeptide of the present invention which has been fully immunosorbed with the same polypeptide. Immunoassays for determining binding are well known to those of skill in the art. A preferred immunoassay is a competitive immunoassay as discussed, infra. Thus, the proteins of the present invention can be employed as immunogens for constructing antibodies immunoreactive to a protein of the present invention for such exemplary utilities as immunoassays or protein purification techniques.

15 Expression of Proteins in Host Cells

Using the nucleic acids of the present invention, one may express a protein of the present invention in a recombinantly engineered cell such as bacteria, yeast, insect, mammalian, or preferably plant cells. The cells produce the protein in a non-natural condition (e.g., in quantity, composition, location, and/or time), because they have been genetically altered through human intervention to do so.

It is expected that those of skill in the art are knowledgeable in the numerous expression systems available for expression of a nucleic acid encoding a protein of the present invention. No attempt to describe in detail the various methods known for the expression of proteins in prokaryotes or eukaryotes will be made.

In brief summary, the expression of isolated nucleic acids encoding a protein of the present invention will typically be achieved by operably linking, for example, the DNA or cDNA to a promoter (which is either constitutive or inducible), followed by incorporation into an expression vector. The vectors can be suitable for replication and integration in either prokaryotes or eukaryotes. Typical expression vectors contain transcription and translation terminators, initiation sequences, and promoters useful for regulation of the expression of the DNA encoding a protein of the present invention. To obtain high level expression of a cloned gene, it is desirable to

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construct expression vectors which contain, at the minimum, a strong promoter to direct transcription, a ribosome binding site for translational initiation, and a transcription/translation terminator. One of skill would recognize that modifications can be made to a protein of the present invention without diminishing its biological activity. Some modifications may be made to facilitate the cloning, expression, or incorporation of the targeting molecule into a fusion protein. Such modifications are well known to those of skill in the art and include, for example, a methionine added at the amino terminus to provide an initiation site, or additional amino acids (e.g., poly His) placed on either terminus to create conveniently located restriction sites or termination codons or purification sequences.

A. Expression in Prokaryotes

Prokaryotic cells may be used as hosts for expression. Prokaryotes most frequently are represented by various strains of *E. coli*; however, other microbial strains may also be used. Commonly used prokaryotic control sequences which are defined herein to include promoters for transcription initiation, optionally with an operator, along with ribosome binding site sequences, include such commonly used promoters as the beta lactamase (penicillinase) and lactose (lac) promoter systems (Chang et al., Nature 198:1056 (1977)), the tryptophan (trp) promoter system (Goeddel et al., Nucleic Acids Res. 8:4057 (1980)) and the lambda derived P L promoter and N-gene ribosome binding site (Shimatake *et al.*, Nature 292:128 (1981)). The inclusion of selection markers in DNA vectors transfected in *E. coli* is also useful. Examples of such markers include genes specifying resistance to ampicillin, tetracycline, or chloramphenicol.

The vector is selected to allow introduction into the appropriate host cell. Bacterial vectors are typically of plasmid or phage origin. Appropriate bacterial cells are infected with phage vector particles or transfected with naked phage vector DNA. If a plasmid vector is used, the bacterial cells are transfected with the plasmid vector DNA. Expression systems for expressing a protein of the present invention are available using *Bacillus sp.* and *Salmonella* (Palva, et al., Gene 22: 229-235 (1983); Mosbach, et al., Nature 302: 543-545 (1983)).

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B. Expression in Eukaryotes

A variety of eukaryotic expression systems such as yeast, insect cell lines, plant and mammalian cells, are known to those of skill in the art. As explained briefly below, a of the present invention can be expressed in these eukaryotic systems.

In some embodiments, transformed/transfected plant cells, as discussed *infra*, are employed as expression systems for production of the proteins of the instant invention.

Synthesis of heterologous proteins in yeast is well known. Sherman, F., et al., Methods in Yeast Genetics, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (1982) is a well recognized work describing the various methods available to produce the protein in yeast. Suitable vectors usually have expression control sequences, such as promoters, including 3-phosphoglycerate kinase or other glycolytic enzymes, and an origin of replication, termination sequences and the like as desired. For instance, suitable vectors are described in the literature (Botstein, et al., Gene 8: 17-24 (1979); Broach, et al., Gene 8: 121-133 (1979)).

A protein of the present invention, once expressed, can be isolated from yeast by lysing the cells and applying standard protein isolation techniques to the lysates. The monitoring of the purification process can be accomplished by using Western blot techniques or radioimmunoassay of other standard immunoassay techniques.

The sequences encoding proteins of the present invention can also be ligated to various expression vectors for use in transfecting cell cultures of, for instance, mammalian, insect, or plant origin. Illustrative of cell cultures useful for the production of the peptides are mammalian cells. Mammalian cell systems often will be in the form of monolayers of cells although mammalian cell suspensions may also be used. A number of suitable host cell lines capable of expressing intact proteins have been developed in the art, and include the HEK293, BHK21, and CHO cell lines. Expression vectors for these cells can include expression control sequences, such as an origin of replication, a promoter (e.g., the CMV promoter, a HSV tk promoter or pgk (phosphoglycerate kinase) promoter), an enhancer (Queen et al., Immunol. Rev. 89: 49 (1986)), and necessary processing information sites, such as ribosome binding sites, RNA splice sites, polyadenylation sites (e.g., an SV40 large T Ag poly A addition site), and transcriptional terminator sequences. Other animal cells useful for production

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of proteins of the present invention are available, for instance, from the American Type Culture Collection Catalogue of Cell Lines and Hybridomas (7th edition, 1992).

Appropriate vectors for expressing proteins of the present invention in insect cells are usually derived from the SF9 baculovirus. Suitable insect cell lines include mosquito larvae, silkworm, armyworm, moth and *Drosophila* cell lines such as a Schneider cell line (See Schneider, *J. Embryol. Exp. Morphol.* 27: 353-365 (1987).

As with yeast, when higher animal or plant host cells are employed, polyadenlyation or transcription terminator sequences are typically incorporated into the vector. An example of a terminator sequence is the polyadenlyation sequence from the bovine growth hormone gene. Sequences for accurate splicing of the transcript may also be included. An example of a splicing sequence is the VP1 intron from SV40 (Sprague, et al., J. Virol. 45: 773-781 (1983)). Additionally, gene sequences to control replication in the host cell may be incorporated into the vector such as those found in bovine papilloma virus type-vectors. Saveria-Campo, M., Bovine Papilloma Virus DNA a Eukaryotic Cloning Vector in DNA Cloning Vol. II a Practical Approach, D.M. Glover, Ed., IRL Press, Arlington, Virginia pp. 213-238 (1985).

Transfection/Transformation of Cells

The method of transformation/transfection is not critical to the instant invention; various methods of transformation or transfection are currently available. As newer methods are available to transform crops or other host cells they may be directly applied. Accordingly, a wide variety of methods have been developed to insert a DNA sequence into the genome of a host cell to obtain the transcription and/or translation of the sequence to effect phenotypic changes in the organism. Thus, any method which provides for efficient transformation/transfection may be employed.

A. Plant Transformation

A DNA sequence coding for the desired polynucleotide of the present invention, for example a cDNA or a genomic sequence encoding a full length protein, will be used to construct a recombinant expression cassette which can be introduced into the desired plant.

Isolated nucleic acid acids of the present invention can be introduced into

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plants according techniques known in the art. Generally, recombinant expression cassettes as described above and suitable for transformation of plant cells are prepared. Techniques for transforming a wide variety of higher plant species are well known and described in the technical, scientific, and patent literature. See, for example, Weising et al., Ann. Rev. Genet. 22: 421-477 (1988). For example, the DNA construct may be introduced directly into the genomic DNA of the plant cell using techniques such as electroporation, PEG poration, particle bombardment, silicon fiber delivery, or microinjection of plant cell protoplasts or embryogenic callus. Alternatively, the DNA constructs may be combined with suitable T-DNA flanking regions and introduced into a conventional Agrobacterium tumefaciens host vector. The virulence functions of the Agrobacterium tumefaciens host will direct the insertion of the construct and adjacent marker into the plant cell DNA when the cell is infected by the bacteria.

The introduction of DNA constructs using polyethylene glycol precipitation is described in Paszkowski et al., Embo J. 3: 2717-2722 (1984). Electroporation techniques are described in Fromm et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 82: 5824 (1985). Ballistic transformation techniques are described in Klein et al., Nature 327: 70-73 (1987).

Agrobacterium tumefaciens-meditated transformation techniques are well described in the scientific literature. See, for example Horsch et al., Science 233: 496-498 (1984), and Fraley et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 80: 4803 (1983). Although Agrobacterium is useful primarily in dicots, certain monocots can be transformed by Agrobacterium. For instance, Agrobacterium transformation of maize is described in U.S. Patent No. 5,550,318.

Other methods of transfection or transformation include (1)

Agrobacterium rhizogenes-mediated transformation (see, e.g., Lichtenstein and Fuller In: Genetic Engineering, vol. 6, PWJ Rigby, Ed., London, Academic Press, 1987; and Lichtenstein, C. P., and Draper, J., In: DNA Cloning, Vol. II, D. M. Glover, Ed., Oxford, IRI Press, 1985), Application PCT/US87/02512 (WO 88/02405 published Apr. 7, 1988) describes the use of A. rhizogenes strain A4 and its Ri plasmid along with A. tumefaciens vectors pARC8 or pARC16 (2) liposome-mediated DNA uptake (see, e.g., Freeman et al., Plant Cell Physiol. 25: 1353, 1984), (3) the vortexing method (see, e.g., Kindle, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci., USA 87: 1228, (1990).

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DNA can also be introduced into plants by direct DNA transfer into pollen as described by Zhou et al., Methods in Enzymology, 101:433 (1983); D. Hess, Intern Rev. Cytol., 107:367 (1987); Luo et al., Plane Mol. Biol. Reporter, 6:165 (1988). Expression of polypeptide coding genes can be obtained by injection of the DNA into reproductive organs of a plant as described by Pena et al., Nature, 325.:274 (1987). DNA can also be injected directly into the cells of immature embryos and the rehydration of desiccated embryos as described by Neuhaus et al., Theor. Appl. Genet., 75:30 (1987); and Benbrook et al., in Proceedings Bio Expo 1986, Butterworth, Stoneham, Mass., pp. 27-54 (1986). A variety of plant viruses that can be employed as vectors are known in the art and include cauliflower mosaic virus (CaMV), geminivirus, brome mosaic virus, and tobacco mosaic virus.

B. Transfection of Prokaryotes, Lower Eukaryotes, and Animal Cells

Animal and lower eukaryotic (e.g., yeast) host cells are competent or rendered competent for transfection by various means. There are several well-known methods of introducing DNA into animal cells. These include: calcium phosphate precipitation, fusion of the recipient cells with bacterial protoplasts containing the DNA, treatment of the recipient cells with liposomes containing the DNA, DEAE dextran, electroporation, biolistics, and micro-injection of the DNA directly into the cells. The transfected cells are cultured by means well known in the art. Kuchler, R.J., Biochemical Methods in Cell Culture and Virology, Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, Inc. (1977).

Synthesis of Proteins

The proteins of the present invention can be constructed using non-cellular synthetic methods. Solid phase synthesis of proteins of less than about 50 amino acids in length may be accomplished by attaching the C-terminal amino acid of the sequence to an insoluble support followed by sequential addition of the remaining amino acids in the sequence. Techniques for solid phase synthesis are described by Barany and Merrifield, Solid-Phase Peptide Synthesis, pp. 3-284 in The Peptides: Analysis, Synthesis, Biology. Vol. 2: Special Methods in Peptide Synthesis, Part A.; Merrifield, et al., J. Am. Chem. Soc. 85: 2149-2156 (1963), and Stewart et al., Solid

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Phase Peptide Synthesis, 2nd ed., Pierce Chem. Co., Rockford, Ill. (1984). Proteins of greater length may be synthesized by condensation of the amino and carboxy termini of shorter fragments. Methods of forming peptide bonds by activation of a carboxy terminal end (e.g., by the use of the coupling reagent N,N'-dicycylohexylcarbodiimide)) is known to those of skill.

Purification of Proteins

The proteins of the present invention may be purified by standard techniques well known to those of skill in the art. Recombinantly produced proteins of the present invention can be directly expressed or expressed as a fusion protein. The recombinant protein is purified by a combination of cell lysis (e.g., sonication, French press) and affinity chromatography. For fusion products, subsequent digestion of the fusion protein with an appropriate proteolytic enzyme releases the desired recombinant protein.

The proteins of this invention, recombinant or synthetic, may be purified to substantial purity by standard techniques well known in the art, including selective precipitation with such substances as ammonium sulfate, column chromatography, immunopurification methods, and others. See, for instance, R. Scopes, Protein Purification: Principles and Practice, Springer-Verlag: New York (1982); Deutscher, Guide to Protein Purification, Academic Press (1990). For example, antibodies may be raised to the proteins as described herein. Purification from E. coli can be achieved following procedures described in U.S. Patent No. 4,511,503. The protein may then be isolated from cells expressing the protein and further purified by standard protein chemistry techniques as described herein. Detection of the expressed protein is achieved by methods known in the art and include, for example, radioimmunoassays, Western blotting techniques or immunoprecipitation.

Transgenic Plant Regeneration

Transformed plant cells which are derived by any of the above transformation techniques can be cultured to regenerate a whole plant which possesses the transformed genotype. Such regeneration techniques often rely on manipulation of certain phytohormones in a tissue culture growth medium, typically relying on a biocide

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and/or herbicide marker which has been introduced together with a polynucleotide of the present invention.

Plants cells transformed with a plant expression vector can be regenerated, e.g., from single cells, callus tissue or leaf discs according to standard plant tissue culture techniques. It is well known in the art that various cells, tissues, and organs from almost any plant can be successfully cultured to regenerate an entire plant. Plant regeneration from cultured protoplasts is described in Evans et al., Protoplasts Isolation and Culture, Handbook of Plant Cell Culture, Macmillilan Publishing Company, New York, pp. 124-176 (1983); and Binding, Regeneration of Plants, Plant Protoplasts, CRC Press, Boca Raton, pp. 21-73 (1985).

The regeneration of plants containing the foreign gene introduced by Agrobacterium from leaf explants can be achieved as described by Horsch et al., Science, 227:1229-1231 (1985). In this procedure, transformants are grown in the presence of a selection agent and in a medium that induces the regeneration of shoots in the plant species being transformed as described by Fraley et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A., 80:4803 (1983). This procedure typically produces shoots within two to four weeks and these transformant shoots are then transferred to an appropriate root-inducing medium containing the selective agent and an antibiotic to prevent bacterial growth. Transgenic plants of the present invention may be fertile or sterile.

Regeneration can also be obtained from plant callus, explants, organs, or parts thereof. Such regeneration techniques are described generally in Klee et al., Ann. Rev. of Plant Phys. 38: 467-486 (1987). The regeneration of plants from either single plant protoplasts or various explants is well known in the art. See, for example, Methods for Plant Molecular Biology, A. Weissbach and H. Weissbach, eds., Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, Calif. (1988). This regeneration and growth process includes the steps of selection of transformant cells and shoots, rooting the transformant shoots and growth of the plantlets in soil. For maize cell culture and regeneration see generally, The Maize Handbook, Freeling and Walbot, Eds., Springer, New York (1994); Corn and Corn Improvement, 3rd edition, Sprague and Dudley Eds., American Society of Agronomy, Madison, Wisconsin (1988).

One of skill will recognize that after the recombinant expression cassette is stably incorporated in transgenic plants and confirmed to be operable, it can be

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introduced into other plants by sexual crossing. Any of a number of standard breeding techniques can be used, depending upon the species to be crossed.

In vegetatively propagated crops, mature transgenic plants can be propagated by the taking of cuttings or by tissue culture techniques to produce multiple 5 identical plants. Selection of desirable transgenics is made and new varieties are obtained and propagated vegetatively for commercial use. In seed propagated crops, mature transgenic plants can be self crossed to produce a homozygous inbred plant. The inbred plant produces seed containing the newly introduced heterologous nucleic acid. These seeds can be grown to produce plants that would produce the selected phenotype, (e.g., altered lignin biosynthesis content or composition).

Parts obtained from the regenerated plant, such as flowers, seeds, leaves, branches, fruit, and the like are included in the invention, provided that these parts comprise cells comprising the isolated nucleic acid of the present invention. Progeny and variants, and mutants of the regenerated plants are also included within the scope of the invention, provided that these parts comprise the introduced nucleic acid sequences.

Transgenic plants expressing the selectable marker can be screened for transmission of the nucleic acid of the present invention by, for example, standard immunoblot and DNA detection techniques. Transgenic lines are also typically evaluated on levels of expression of the heterologous nucleic acid. Expression at the RNA level can be determined initially to identify and quantitate expression-positive plants. Standard techniques for RNA analysis can be employed and include PCR amplification assays using oligonucleotide primers designed to amplify only the heterologous RNA templates and solution hybridization assays using heterologous nucleic acid-specific probes. The RNA-positive plants can then analyzed for protein expression by Western immunoblot analysis using the specifically reactive antibodies of the present invention. In addition, in situ hybridization and immunocytochemistry according to standard protocols can be done using heterologous nucleic acid specific polynucleotide probes and antibodies, respectively, to localize sites of expression within transgenic tissue. Generally, a number of transgenic lines are usually screened for the incorporated nucleic acid to identify and select plants with the most appropriate expression profiles.

A preferred embodiment is a transgenic plant that is homozygous for the

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added heterologous nucleic acid; i.e., a transgenic plant that contains two added nucleic acid sequences, one gene at the same locus on each chromosome of a chromosome pair. A homozygous transgenic plant can be obtained by sexually mating (selfing) a heterozygous transgenic plant that contains a single added heterologous nucleic acid, germinating some

of the seed produced and analyzing the resulting plants produced for altered lignification relative to a control plant (i.e., native, non-transgenic). Back-crossing to a parental plant and out-crossing with a non-transgenic plant are also contemplated.

10 Modulating lignin biosynthesis Content and/or Composition

The present invention further provides a method for modulating (i.e., increasing or decreasing) lignin biosynthesis content or composition in a plant or part thereof. Modulation can be effected by increasing or decreasing the lignin biosynthesis content (i.e., the total amount of lignin biosynthesis) and/or the lignin biosynthesis composition (the ratio of various lignin biosynthesis monomers in the plant) in a plant. The method comprises transforming a plant cell with a recombinant expression cassette comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention as described above to obtain a transformed plant cell, growing the transformed plant cell under plant forming conditions, and inducing expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention in the plant for a time sufficient to modulate lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition in the plant or plant part.

In some embodiments, lignification in a plant may be modulated by altering, in vivo or in vitro, the promoter of a non-isolated lignin biosynthesis gene to up- or down-regulate gene expression. In some embodiments, the coding regions of native lignin biosynthesis genes can be altered via substitution, addition, insertion, or deletion to decrease activity of the encoded enzyme. See, e.g., Kmiec, U.S. Patent 5,565,350; Zarling et al., PCT/US93/03868. And in some embodiments, an isolated nucleic acid (e.g., a vector) comprising a promoter sequence is transfected into a plant cell. Subsequently, a plant cell comprising the promoter operably linked to a polynucleotide of the present invention is selected for by means known to those of skill in the art such as, but not limited to, Southern blot, DNA sequencing, or PCR analysis using primers specific to the promoter and to the gene and detecting amplicons

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produced therefrom. A plant or plant part altered or modified by the foregoing embodiments is grown under plant forming conditions for a time sufficient to modulate lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition in the plant. Plant forming conditions are well known in the art and discussed briefly, *supra*.

In general, content or composition is increased or decreased by at least 5%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, or 90% relative to a native control plant, plant part, or cell lacking the aforementioned recombinant expression cassette. Modulation in the present invention may occur during and/or subsequent to growth of the plant to the desired stage of development. Modulating nucleic acid expression temporally and/or in particular tissues can be controlled by employing the appropriate promoter operably linked to a polynucleotide of the present invention in, for example, sense or antisense orientation as discussed in greater detail, *supra*. Induction of expression of a polynucleotide of the present invention can also be controlled by exogenous administration of an effective amount of inducing compound. Inducible promoters and inducing compounds which activate expression from these promoters are well known in the art. In preferred embodiments, lignification is modulated in monocots, particularly maize.

Molecular Markers

The present invention provides a method of genotyping a plant comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention. Preferably, the plant is a monocot, such as maize or sorghum. Genotyping provides a means of distinguishing homologs of a chromosome pair and can be used to differentiate segregants in a plant population. Molecular marker methods can be used for phylogenetic studies, characterizing genetic relationships among crop varieties, identifying crosses or somatic hybrids, localizing chromosomal segments affecting monogenic traits, map based cloning, and the study of quantitative inheritance. See, e.g., *Plant Molecular Biology: A Laboratory Manual*, Chapter 7, Clark, Ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin (1997). For molecular marker methods, see generally, The DNA Revolution by Andrew H. Paterson 1996 (Chapter 2) in: Genome Mapping in Plants (ed. Andrew H. Paterson) by Academic Press/R. G. Landis Company, Austin, Texas, pp.7-21.

The particular method of genotyping in the present invention may

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employ any number of molecular marker analytic techniques such as, but not limited to, restriction fragment length polymorphisms (RFLPs). RFLPs are the product of allelic differences between DNA restriction fragments caused by nucleotide sequence variability. As is well known to those of skill in the art, RFLPs are typically detected by extraction of genomic DNA and digestion with a restriction enzyme. Generally, the resulting fragments are separated according to size and hybridized with a probe; single copy probes are preferred. Restriction fragments from homologous chromosomes are revealed. Differences in fragment size among alleles represent an RFLP. Thus, the present invention further provides a means to follow segregation of a lignin biosynthesis gene or nucleic acid of the present invention as well as chromosomal sequences genetically linked to these genes or nucleic acids using such techniques as RFLP analysis. Linked chromosomal sequences are within 50 centiMorgans (cM), often within 40 or 30 cM, preferably within 20 or 10 cM, more preferably within 5, 3, 2, or 1 cM of a lignin biosynthesis gene.

In the present invention, the nucleic acid probes employed for molecular marker mapping of plant nuclear genomes selectively hybridize, under selective hybridization conditions, to a gene encoding a polynucleotide of the present invention. In preferred embodiments, the probes are selected from polynucleotides of the present invention. Typically, these probes are cDNA probes or *Pst I* genomic clones. The length of the probes is discussed in greater detail, *supra*, but are typically at least 15 bases in length, more preferably at least 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, or 50 bases in length. Generally, however, the probes are less than about 1 kilobase in length. Preferably, the probes are single copy probes that hybridize to a unique locus in a haploid chromosome complement. Some exemplary restriction enzymes employed in RFLP mapping are EcoRI, EcoRv, and SstI. As used herein the term "restriction enzyme" includes reference to a composition that recognizes and, alone or in conjunction with another composition, cleaves at a specific nucleotide sequence.

The method of detecting an RFLP comprises the steps of (a) digesting genomic DNA of a plant with a restriction enzyme; (b) hybridizing a nucleic acid probe, under selective hybridization conditions, to a sequence of a polynucleotide of the present of said genomic DNA; (c) detecting therefrom a RFLP. Other methods of differentiating polymorphic (allelic) variants of polynucleotides of the present invention

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can be had by utilizing molecular marker techniques well known to those of skill in the art including such techniques as: 1) single stranded conformation analysis (SSCP); 2) denaturing gradient gel electrophoresis (DGGE); 3) RNase protection assays; 4) allelespecific oligonucleotides (ASOs); 5) the use of proteins which recognize nucleotide mismatches, such as the E. coli mutS protein; and 6) allele-specific PCR. Other approaches based on the detection of mismatches between the two complementary DNA strands include clamped denaturing gel electrophoresis (CDGE); heteroduplex analysis (HA); and chemical mismatch cleavage (CMC). Exemplary polymorphic variants are provided in Table I, supra. Thus, the present invention further provides a method of genotyping comprising the steps of contacting, under stringent hybridization conditions, a sample suspected of comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention with a nucleic acid probe. Generally, the sample is a plant sample; preferably, a sample suspected of comprising a maize polynucleotide of the present invention (e.g., gene, mRNA). The nucleic acid probe selectively hybridizes, under stringent conditions, to a subsequence of a polynucleotide of the present invention comprising a polymorphic marker. Selective hybridization of the nucleic acid probe to the polymorphic marker nucleic acid sequence yields a hybridization complex. Detection of the hybridization complex indicates the presence of that polymorphic marker in the sample. In preferred embodiments, the nucleic acid probe comprises a polynucleotide of the present invention.

UTR's and Codon Preference

In general, translational efficiency has been found to be regulated by specific sequence elements in the 5' non-coding or untranslated region (5' UTR) of the RNA. Positive sequence motifs include translational initiation consensus sequences (Kozak, Nucleic Acids Res. 15:8125 (1987)) and the 5<G> 7 methyl GpppG cap structure (Drummond et al., Nucleic Acids Res. 13:7375 (1985)). Negative elements include stable intramolecular 5' UTR stem-loop structures (Muesing et al., Cell 48:691 (1987)) and AUG sequences or short open reading frames preceded by an appropriate AUG in the 5' UTR (Kozak, supra, Rao et al., Mol. and Cell. Biol. 8:284 (1988)). Accordingly, the present invention provides 5' and/or 3' UTR regions for modulation of translation of heterologous coding sequences.

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Further, the polypeptide-encoding segments of the polynucleotides of the present invention can be modified to alter codon usage. Altered codon usage can be employed to alter translational efficiency and/or to optimize the coding sequence for expression in a desired host or to optimize the codon usage in a heterologous sequence for expression in maize. Codon usage in the coding regions of the polynucleotides of the present invention can be analyzed statistically using commercially available software packages such as "Codon Preference" available from the University of Wisconsin Genetics Computer Group (see Devereaux et al., Nucleic Acids Res. 12: 387-395 (1984)) or MacVector 4.1 (Eastman Kodak Co., New Haven, Conn.). Thus, the present invention provides a codon usage frequency characteristic of the coding region of at least one of the polynucleotides of the present invention. The number of polynucleotides that can be used to determine a codon usage frequency can be any integer from 1 to the number of polynucleotides of the present invention as provided herein. Optionally, the polynucleotides will be full-length sequences. An exemplary number of sequences for statistical analysis can be at least 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, or 100.

Sequence Shuffling

The present invention provides methods for sequence shuffling using polynucleotides of the present invention, and compositions resulting therefrom. Sequence shuffling is described in PCT publication No. 96/19256. See also, Zhang, J.-H., et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 94:4504-4509 (1997). Generally, sequence shuffling provides a means for generating libraries of polynucleotides having a desired characteristic which can be selected or screened for. Libraries of recombinant polynucleotides are generated from a population of related sequence polynucleotides which comprise sequence regions which have substantial sequence identity and can be homologously recombined in vitro or in vivo. The population of sequence-recombined polynucleotides comprises a subpopulation of polynucleotides which possess desired or advantageous characteristics and which can be selected by a suitable selection or screening method. The characteristics can be any property or attribute capable of being selected for or detected in a screening system, and may include properties of: an encoded protein, a transcriptional element, a sequence controlling transcription, RNA processing, RNA stability, chromatin conformation, translation, or other expression property of a gene or transgene, a

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replicative element, a protein-binding element, or the like, such as any feature which confers a selectable or detectable property. In some embodiments, the selected characteristic will be an increased K_m and/or K_{cut} over the wild-type protein as provided herein. In other embodiments, a protein or polynculeotide generated from sequence shuffling will have a ligand binding affinity greater than the non-shuffled wild-type polynucleotide. The increase in such properties can be at least 110%, 120%, 130%, 140% or at least 150% of the wild-type value.

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Detection of Nucleic Acids

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The present invention further provides methods for detecting a polynucleotide of the present invention in a nucleic acid sample suspected of comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention, such as a plant cell lysate, particularly a lysate of corn. In some embodiments, a lignin biosynthesis gene or portion thereof can be amplified prior to the step of contacting the nucleic acid sample with a polynucleotide of the present invention. The nucleic acid sample is contacted with the polynucleotide to form a hybridization complex. The polynucleotide hybridizes under stringent conditions to a gene encoding a polypeptide of the present invention. Formation of the hybridization complex is used to detect a gene encoding a polypeptide of the present invention in the nucleic acid sample. Those of skill will appreciate that an isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide of the present invention should lack cross-hybridizing sequences in common with non-lignin biosynthesis genes that would yield a false positive result.

Detection of the hybridization complex can be achieved using any number of well known methods. For example, the nucleic acid sample, or a portion thereof, may be assayed by hybridization formats including but not limited to, solution phase, solid phase, mixed phase, or in situ hybridization assays. Briefly, in solution (or liquid) phase hybridizations, both the target nucleic acid and the probe or primer are free to interact in the reaction mixture. In solid phase hybridization assays, probes or primers are typically linked to a solid support where they are available for hybridization with target nucleic in solution. In mixed phase, nucleic acid intermediates in solution hybridize to target nucleic acids in solution as well as to a nucleic acid linked to a solid support. In in situ hybridization, the target nucleic acid is liberated from its cellular

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surroundings in such as to be available for hybridization within the cell while preserving the cellular morphology for subsequent interpretation and analysis. The following articles provide an overview of the various hybridization assay formats: Singer et al., Biotechniques 4(3): 230-250 (1986); Haase et al., Methods in Virology, Vol. VII, pp. 189-226 (1984); Wilkinson, The theory and practice of in situ hybridization in: In situ Hybridization, D.G. Wilkinson, Ed., IRL Press, Oxford University Press, Oxford; and Nucleic Acid Hybridization: A Practical Approach, Hames, B.D. and Higgins, S.J., Eds., IRL Press (1987).

10 Nucleic Acid Labels and Detection Methods

The means by which nucleic acids of the present invention are labeled is not a critical aspect of the present invention and can be accomplished by any number of methods currently known or later developed. Detectable labels suitable for use in the present invention include any composition detectable by spectroscopic, radioisotopic, photochemical, biochemical, immunochemical, electrical, optical or chemical means. Useful labels in the present invention include biotin for staining with labeled streptavidin conjugate, magnetic beads, fluorescent dyes (e.g., fluorescein, texas red, rhodamine, green fluorescent protein, and the like), radiolabels (e.g., ³H, ¹²⁵I, ³⁵S, ¹⁴C, or ³²P), enzymes (e.g., horse radish peroxidase, alkaline phosphatase and others commonly used in an ELISA), and colorimetric labels such as colloidal gold or colored glass or plastic (e.g., polystyrene, polypropylene, latex, etc.) beads.

Nucleic acids of the present invention can be labeled by any one of several methods typically used to detect the presence of hybridized nucleic acids. One common method of detection is the use of autoradiography using probes labeled with ³H, ¹²⁵I, ³⁵S, ¹⁴C, or ³²P, or the like. The choice of radio-active isotope depends on research preferences due to ease of synthesis, stability, and half lives of the selected isotopes. Other labels include ligands which bind to antibodies labeled with fluorophores, chemiluminescent agents, and enzymes. Alternatively, probes can be conjugated directly with labels such as fluorophores, chemiluminescent agents or enzymes. The choice of label depends on sensitivity required, ease of conjugation with the probe, stability requirements, and available instrumentation. Labeling the nucleic acids of the present invention is readily achieved such as by the use of labeled PCR

primers.

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In some embodiments, the label is simultaneously incorporated during the amplification step in the preparation of the nucleic acids. Thus, for example, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) with labeled primers or labeled nucleotides will provide a labeled amplification product. In another embodiment, transcription amplification using a labeled nucleotide (e.g., fluorescein-labeled UTP and/or CTP) incorporates a label into the transcribed nucleic acids.

Non-radioactive probes are often labeled by indirect means. For example, a ligand molecule is covalently bound to the probe. The ligand then binds to an anti-ligand molecule which is either inherently detectable or covalently bound to a detectable signal system, such as an enzyme, a fluorophore, or a chemiluminescent compound. Enzymes of interest as labels will primarily be hydrolases, such as phosphatases, esterases and glycosidases, or oxidoreductases, particularly peroxidases. Fluorescent compounds include fluorescein and its derivatives, rhodamine and its derivatives, dansyl, umbelliferone, etc. Chemiluminescers include luciferin, and 2,3-dihydrophthalazinediones, e.g., luminol. Ligands and anti-ligands may be varied widely. Where a ligand has a natural anti-ligand, namely ligands such as biotin, thyroxine, and cortisol, it can be used in conjunction with its labeled, naturally occurring anti-ligands. Alternatively, any haptenic or antigenic compound can be used in combination with an antibody.

Probes can also be labeled by direct conjugation with a label. For example, cloned DNA probes have been coupled directly to horseradish peroxidase or alkaline phosphatase, (Renz. M., and Kurz, K., A Colorimetric Method for DNA Hybridization, Nucl. Acids Res. 12: 3435-3444 (1984)) and synthetic oligonucleotides have been coupled directly with alkaline phosphatase (Jablonski, E., et al., Preparation of Oligodeoxynucleotide-Alkaline Phosphatase Conjugates and Their Use as Hybridization Probes, Nuc. Acids. Res. 14: 6115-6128 (1986); and Li P., et al., Enzyme-linked Synthetic Oligonucleotide probes: Non-Radioactive Detection of Enterotoxigenic Escherichia Coli in Faeca Specimens, Nucl. Acids Res. 15: 5275-5287 (1987)).

Means of detecting such labels are well known to those of skill in the art. Thus, for example, radiolabels may be detected using photographic film or scintillation

counters, fluorescent markers may be detected using a photodetector to detect emitted light. Enzymatic labels are typically detected by providing the enzyme with a substrate and detecting the reaction product produced by the action of the enzyme on the substrate, and colorimetric labels are detected by simply visualizing the colored label.

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Antibodies to Proteins

Antibodies can be raised to a protein of the present invention, including individual, allelic, strain, or species variants, and fragments thereof, both in their naturally occurring (full-length) forms and in recombinant forms. Additionally, antibodies are raised to these proteins in either their native configurations or in non-native configurations. Anti-idiotypic antibodies can also be generated. Many methods of making antibodies are known to persons of skill. The following discussion is presented as a general overview of the techniques available; however, one of skill will recognize that many variations upon the following methods are known.

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A number of immunogens are used to produce antibodies specifically reactive with a protein of the present invention. An isolated recombinant, synthetic, or native lignin biosynthesis protein of 5 amino acids in length or greater and selected from a protein encoded by a polynucleotide of the present invention, such as exemplary sequences of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75, are the preferred immunogens (antigen) for the production of monoclonal or polyclonal antibodies. Those of skill will readily understand that the proteins of the present invention are typically denatured, and optionally reduced, prior to formation of antibodies for screening expression libraries or other assays in which a putative protein of the present invention is expressed or denatured in a non-native secondary, tertiary, or quartenary structure. Naturally occurring lignin biosynthesis polypeptides can be used either in pure or impure form.

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The protein of the present invention is then injected into an animal capable of producing antibodies. Either monoclonal or polyclonal antibodies can be generated for subsequent use in immunoassays to measure the presence and quantity of the protein of the present invention. Methods of producing polyclonal antibodies are known to those of skill in the art. In brief, an immunogen (antigen), preferably a purified protein, a protein coupled to an appropriate carrier (e.g., GST, keyhole limpet hemanocyanin, etc.), or a protein incorporated into an immunization vector such as a

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recombinant vaccinia virus (see, U.S. Patent No. 4,722,848) is mixed with an adjuvant and animals are immunized with the mixture. The animal's immune response to the immunogen preparation is monitored by taking test bleeds and determining the titer of reactivity to the protein of interest. When appropriately high titers of antibody to the immunogen are obtained, blood is collected from the animal and antisera are prepared. Further fractionation of the antisera to enrich for antibodies reactive to the protein is performed where desired (See, e.g., Coligan, Current Protocols in Immunology, Wiley/Greene, NY (1991); and Harlow and Lane, Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Press, NY (1989)).

Antibodies, including binding fragments and single chain recombinant versions thereof, against predetermined fragments of a protein of the present invention are raised by immunizing animals, e.g., with conjugates of the fragments with carrier proteins as described above. Typically, the immunogen of interest is a protein of at least about 5 amino acids, more typically the protein is 10 amino acids in length, preferably, 15 amino acids in length and more preferably the protein is 20 amino acids in length or greater. The peptides are typically coupled to a carrier protein (e.g., as a fusion protein), or are recombinantly expressed in an immunization vector. Antigenic determinants on peptides to which antibodies bind are typically 3 to 10 amino acids in length.

Monoclonal antibodies are prepared from cells secreting the desired antibody. Monoclonals antibodies are screened for binding to a protein from which the immunogen was derived. Specific monoclonal and polyclonal antibodies will usually have an antibody binding site with an affinity constant for its cognate monovalent antigen at least between 10⁶-10⁷, usually at least 10⁸, preferably at least 10⁹, more preferably at least 10¹⁰, and most preferably at least 10¹¹ liters/mole.

In some instances, it is desirable to prepare monoclonal antibodies from various mammalian hosts, such as mice, rodents, primates, humans, etc. Description of techniques for preparing such monoclonal antibodies are found in, e.g., Basic and Clinical Immunology, 4th ed., Stites et al., Eds., Lange Medical Publications, Los Altos, CA, and references cited therein; Harlow and Lane, Supra; Goding, Monoclonal Antibodies: Principles and Practice, 2nd ed., Academic Press, New York, NY (1986); and Kohler and Milstein, Nature 256: 495-497 (1975). Summarized briefly, this

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method proceeds by injecting an animal with an immunogen comprising a protein of the present invention. The animal is then sacrificed and cells taken from its spleen, which are fused with myeloma cells. The result is a hybrid cell or "hybridoma" that is capable of reproducing *in vitro*. The population of hybridomas is then screened to isolate individual clones, each of which secrete a single antibody species to the immunogen. In this manner, the individual antibody species obtained are the products of immortalized and cloned single B cells from the immune animal generated in response to a specific site recognized on the immunogenic substance.

Other suitable techniques involve selection of libraries of recombinant antibodies in phage or similar vectors (see, e.g., Huse et al., Science 246: 1275-1281 (1989); and Ward, et al., Nature 341: 544-546 (1989); and Vaughan et al., Nature Biotechnology, 14: 309-314 (1996)). Alternatively, high avidity human monoclonal antibodies can be obtained from transgenic mice comprising fragments of the unrearranged human heavy and light chain Ig loci (i.e., minilocus transgenic mice). Fishwild et al., Nature Biotech., 14: 845-851 (1996). Also, recombinant immunoglobulins may be produced. See, Cabilly, U.S. Patent No. 4,816,567; and Queen et al., Proc. Nat'l Acad. Sci. 86: 10029-10033 (1989).

The antibodies of this invention are also used for affinity chromatography in isolating proteins of the present invention. Columns are prepared, e.g., with the antibodies linked to a solid support, e.g., particles, such as agarose, Sephadex, or the like, where a cell lysate is passed through the column, washed, and treated with increasing concentrations of a mild denaturant, whereby purified protein are released.

The antibodies can be used to screen expression libraries for particular expression products such as normal or abnormal protein. Usually the antibodies in such a procedure are labeled with a moiety allowing easy detection of presence of antigen by antibody binding.

Antibodies raised against a protein of the present invention can also be used to raise anti-idiotypic antibodies. These are useful for detecting or diagnosing various pathological conditions related to the presence of the respective antigens.

Frequently, the proteins and antibodies of the present invention will be labeled by joining, either covalently or non-covalently, a substance which provides for

a detectable signal. A wide variety of labels and conjugation techniques are known and are reported extensively in both the scientific and patent literature. Suitable labels include radionucleotides, enzymes, substrates, cofactors, inhibitors, fluorescent moieties, chemiluminescent moieties, magnetic particles, and the like.

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Protein Immunoassays

Means of detecting the proteins of the present invention are not critical aspects of the present invention. In a preferred embodiment, the proteins are detected and/or quantified using any of a number of well recognized immunological binding assays (see, e.g., U.S. Patents 4,366,241; 4,376,110; 4,517,288; and 4,837,168). For a review of the general immunoassays, see also Methods in Cell Biology, Vol. 37: Antibodies in Cell Biology, Asai, Ed., Academic Press, Inc. New York (1993); Basic and Clinical Immunology 7th Edition, Stites & Terr, Eds. (1991). Moreover, the immunoassays of the present invention can be performed in any of several configurations, e.g., those reviewed in Enzyme Immunoassay, Maggio, Ed., CRC Press, Boca Raton, Florida (1980); Tijan, Practice and Theory of Enzyme Immunoassays, Laboratory Techniques in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Elsevier Science Publishers B.V., Amsterdam (1985); Harlow and Lane, supra; Immunoassay: A Practical Guide, Chan, Ed., Academic Press, Orlando, FL (1987); Principles and Practice of Immunoassaysm, Price and Newman Eds., Stockton Press, NY (1991); and Non-isotopic Immunoassays, Ngo, Ed., Plenum Press, NY (1988). Immunological binding assays (or immunoassays) typically utilize a "capture agent" to specifically bind to and often immobilize the analyte (in this case, a protein of the present invention). The capture agent is a moiety that specifically binds to the analyte. In a preferred embodiment, the capture agent is an antibody that specifically binds a protein(s) of the present invention. The antibody may be produced by any of a number of means known to those of skill in the art as described herein.

Immunoassays also often utilize a labeling agent to specifically bind to and label the binding complex formed by the capture agent and the analyte. The labeling agent may itself be one of the moieties comprising the antibody/analyte complex. Thus, the labeling agent may be a labeled protein of the present invention or a labeled antibody specifically reactive to a protein of the present invention.

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Alternatively, the labeling agent may be a third moiety, such as another antibody, that specifically binds to the antibody/protein complex.

In a preferred embodiment, the labeling agent is a second antibody bearing a label. Alternatively, the second antibody may lack a label, but it may, in turn, be bound by a labeled third antibody specific to antibodies of the species from which the second antibody is derived. The second can be modified with a detectable moiety, such as biotin, to which a third labeled molecule can specifically bind, such as enzyme-labeled streptavidin.

Other proteins capable of specifically binding immunoglobulin constant regions, such as protein A or protein G may also be used as the label agent. These proteins are normal constituents of the cell walls of streptococcal bacteria. They exhibit a strong non-immunogenic reactivity with immunoglobulin constant regions from a variety of species (See, generally Kronval, et al., J. Immunol. 111: 1401-1406 (1973), and Akerstrom, et al., J. Immunol. 135: 2589-2542 (1985)).

Throughout the assays, incubation and/or washing steps may be required after each combination of reagents. Incubation steps can vary from about 5 seconds to several hours, preferably from about 5 minutes to about 24 hours. However, the incubation time will depend upon the assay format, analyte, volume of solution, concentrations, and the like. Usually, the assays will be carried out at ambient temperature, although they can be conducted over a range of temperatures, such as 10°C to 40°C.

While the details of the immunoassays of the present invention may vary with the particular format employed, the method of detecting a protein of the present invention in a biological sample generally comprises the steps of contacting the biological sample with an antibody which specifically reacts, under immunologically reactive conditions, to a protein of the present invention. The antibody is allowed to bind to the protein under immunologically reactive conditions, and the presence of the bound antibody is detected directly or indirectly.

30 A. Non-Competitive Assay Formats

Immunoassays for detecting proteins of the present invention include competitive and noncompetitive formats. Noncompetitive immunoassays are assays in

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which the amount of captured analyte (i.e., a protein of the present invention) is directly measured. In one preferred "sandwich" assay, for example, the capture agent (e.g., an antibody specifically reactive, under immunoreactive conditions, to a protein of the present invention) can be bound directly to a solid substrate where they are immobilized. These immobilized antibodies then capture the protein present in the test sample. The protein thus immobilized is then bound by a labeling agent, such as a second antibody bearing a label. Alternatively, the second antibody may lack a label, but it may, in turn, be bound by a labeled third antibody specific to antibodies of the species from which the second antibody is derived. The second can be modified with a detectable moiety, such as biotin, to which a third labeled molecule can specifically bind, such as enzyme-labeled streptavidin.

B. Competitive Assay Formats

In competitive assays, the amount of analyte present in the sample is measured indirectly by measuring the amount of an added (exogenous) analyte (e.g., a protein of the present invention) displaced (or competed away) from a capture agent (e.g., an antibody specifically reactive, under immunoreactive conditions, to the protein) by the analyte present in the sample. In one competitive assay, a known amount of analyte is added to the sample and the sample is then contacted with a capture agent that specifically binds a protein of the present invention. The amount of protein bound to the capture agent is inversely proportional to the concentration of analyte present in the sample.

In a particularly preferred embodiment, the antibody is immobilized on a solid substrate. The amount of protein bound to the antibody may be determined either by measuring the amount of protein present in a protein/antibody complex, or alternatively by measuring the amount of remaining uncomplexed protein. The amount of protein may be detected by providing a labeled protein.

A hapten inhibition assay is another preferred competitive assay. In this assay a known analyte, (such as a protein of the present invention) is immobilized on a solid substrate. A known amount of antibody specifically reactive, under immunoreactive conditions, to the protein is added to the sample, and the sample is then contacted with the immobilized protein. In this case, the amount of antibody

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bound to the immobilized protein is inversely proportional to the amount of protein present in the sample. Again, the amount of immobilized antibody may be detected by detecting either the immobilized fraction of antibody or the fraction of the antibody that remains in solution. Detection may be direct where the antibody is labeled or indirect by the subsequent addition of a labeled moiety that specifically binds to the antibody as described above.

C. Generation of pooled antisera for use in immunoassays

A protein that specifically binds to or that is specifically immunoreactive with an antibody generated against a defined immunogen, such as an immunogen consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75, is determined in an immunoassay. The immunoassay uses a polyclonal antiserum which is raised to a polypeptide of the present invention (i.e., the immunogenic polypeptide). This antiserum is selected to have low crossreactivity against other proteins and any such crossreactivity is removed by immunoabsorbtion prior to use in the immunoassay (e.g., by immunosorbtion of the antisera with a protein of different substrate specificity (e.g., a different enzyme) and/or a protein with the same substrate specificity but of a different form).

In order to produce antisera for use in an immunoassay, a polypeptide (e.g., SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75) is isolated as described herein. For example, recombinant protein can be produced in a mammalian or other eukaryotic cell line. An inbred strain of mice is immunized with the protein of using a standard adjuvant, such as Freund's adjuvant, and a standard mouse immunization protocol (see Harlow and Lane, supra). Alternatively, a synthetic polypeptide derived from the sequences disclosed herein and conjugated to a carrier protein is used as an immunogen. Polyclonal sera are collected and titered against the immunogenic polypeptide in an immunoassay, for example, a solid phase immunoassay with the immunogen immobilized on a solid support. Polyclonal antisera with a titer of 10⁴ or greater are selected and tested for their cross reactivity against polypeptides of different forms or substrate specificity, using a competitive binding immunoassay such as the one described in Harlow and Lane, supra, at pages 570-573. Preferably, two or more distinct forms of polypeptides are used in this determination. These distinct types of

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polypeptides are used as competitors to identify antibodies which are specifically bound by the polypeptide being assayed for. The competitive polypeptides can be produced as recombinant proteins and isolated using standard molecular biology and protein chemistry techniques as described herein.

Immunoassays in the competitive binding format are used for crossreactivity determinations. For example, the immunogenic polypeptide is immobilized to a solid support. Proteins added to the assay compete with the binding of the antisera to the immobilized antigen. The ability of the above proteins to compete with the binding of the antisera to the immobilized protein is compared to the immunogenic polypeptide. The percent crossreactivity for the above proteins is calculated, using standard calculations. Those antisera with less than 10% crossreactivity with a distinct form of a polypeptide are selected and pooled. The crossreacting antibodies are then removed from the pooled antisera by immunoabsorbtion with a distinct form of a polypeptide.

The immunoabsorbed and pooled antisera are then used in a competitive binding immunoassay as described herein to compare a second "target" polypeptide to the immunogenic polypeptide. In order to make this comparison, the two polypeptides are each assayed at a wide range of concentrations and the amount of each polypeptide required to inhibit 50% of the binding of the antisera to the immobilized protein is determined using standard techniques. If the amount of the target polypeptide required is less than twice the amount of the immunogenic polypeptide that is required, then the target polypeptide is said to specifically bind to an antibody generated to the immunogenic protein. As a final determination of specificity, the pooled antisera is fully immunosorbed with the immunogenic polypeptide until no binding to the polypeptide used in the immunosorbtion is detectable. The fully immunosorbed antisera is then tested for reactivity with the test polypeptide. If no reactivity is observed, then the test polypeptide is specifically bound by the antisera elicited by the immunogenic protein.

30 D. Other Assay Formats

In a particularly preferred embodiment, Western blot (immunoblot) analysis is used to detect and quantify the presence of protein of the present invention in

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the sample. The technique generally comprises separating sample proteins by gel electrophoresis on the basis of molecular weight, transferring the separated proteins to a suitable solid support, (such as a nitrocellulose filter, a nylon filter, or derivatized nylon filter), and incubating the sample with the antibodies that specifically bind a protein of the present invention. The antibodies specifically bind to the protein on the solid support. These antibodies may be directly labeled or alternatively may be subsequently detected using labeled antibodies (e.g., labeled sheep anti-mouse antibodies) that specifically bind to the antibodies.

10 E. Quantification of Proteins.

The proteins of the present invention may be detected and quantified by any of a number of means well known to those of skill in the art. These include analytic biochemical methods such as electrophoresis, capillary electrophoresis, high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), thin layer chromatography (TLC), hyperdiffusion chromatography, and the like, and various immunological methods such as fluid or gel precipitin reactions, immunodiffusion (single or double), immunoelectrophoresis, radioimmunoassays (RIAs), enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISAs), immunofluorescent assays, and the like.

20 F. Reduction of Non-Specific Binding

One of skill will appreciate that it is often desirable to reduce non-specific binding in immunoassays and during analyte purification. Where the assay involves an antigen, antibody, or other capture agent immobilized on a solid substrate, it is desirable to minimize the amount of non-specific binding to the substrate. Means of reducing such non-specific binding are well known to those of skill in the art. Typically, this involves coating the substrate with a proteinaceous composition. In particular, protein compositions such as bovine serum albumin (BSA), nonfat powdered milk, and gelatin are widely used.

30 G. Immunoassay Labels

The labeling agent can be, e.g., a monoclonal antibody, a polyclonal antibody, a binding protein or complex, or a polymer such as an affinity matrix,

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carbohydrate or lipid. Detectable labels suitable for use in the present invention include composition detectable by spectroscopic, radioisotopic, photochemical, biochemical, immunochemical, electrical, optical or chemical means. Detection may proceed by any known method, such as immunoblotting, western analysis, gel-mobility shift assays, fluorescent in situ hybridization analysis (FISH), tracking of radioactive or bioluminescent markers, nuclear magnetic resonance, electron paramagnetic resonance, stopped-flow spectroscopy, column chromatography, capillary electrophoresis, or other methods which track a molecule based upon an alteration in size and/or charge. The particular label or detectable group used in the assay is not a critical aspect of the invention. The detectable group can be any material having a detectable physical or chemical property. Such detectable labels have been well-developed in the field of immunoassays and, in general, any label useful in such methods can be applied to the present invention. Thus, a label is any composition detectable by spectroscopic, photochemical, biochemical, immunochemical, electrical, optical or chemical means. Useful labels in the present invention include magnetic beads, fluorescent dyes, radiolabels, enzymes, and colorimetric labels or colored glass or plastic beads, as discussed for nucleic acid labels, supra.

The label may be coupled directly or indirectly to the desired component of the assay according to methods well known in the art. As indicated above, a wide variety of labels may be used, with the choice of label depending on the sensitivity required, ease of conjugation of the compound, stability requirements, available instrumentation, and disposal provisions.

Non-radioactive labels are often attached by indirect means. Generally, a ligand molecule (e.g., biotin) is covalently bound to the molecule. The ligand then binds to an anti-ligand (e.g., streptavidin) molecule which is either inherently detectable or covalently bound to a signal system, such as a detectable enzyme, a fluorescent compound, or a chemiluminescent compound. A number of ligands and anti-ligands can be used. Where a ligand has a natural anti-ligand, for example, biotin, thyroxine, and cortisol, it can be used in conjunction with the labeled, naturally occurring anti-ligands. Alternatively, any haptenic or antigenic compound can be used in combination with an antibody.

The molecules can also be conjugated directly to signal generating

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compounds, e.g., by conjugation with an enzyme or fluorophore. Enzymes of interest as labels will primarily be hydrolases, particularly phosphatases, esterases and glycosidases, or oxidoreductases, particularly peroxidases. Fluorescent compounds include fluorescein and its derivatives, rhodamine and its derivatives, dansyl, umbelliferone, etc. Chemiluminescent compounds include luciferin, and 2,3-dihydrophthalazinediones, e.g., luminol. For a review of various labeling or signal producing systems which may be used, see, U.S. Patent No. 4,391,904, which is incorporated herein by reference.

Means of detecting labels are well known to those of skill in the art. Thus, for example, where the label is a radioactive label, means for detection include a scintillation counter or photographic film as in autoradiography. Where the label is a fluorescent label, it may be detected by exciting the fluorochrome with the appropriate wavelength of light and detecting the resulting fluorescence, e.g., by microscopy, visual inspection, via photographic film, by the use of electronic detectors such as charge coupled devices (CCDs) or photomultipliers and the like. Similarly, enzymatic labels may be detected by providing appropriate substrates for the enzyme and detecting the resulting reaction product. Finally, simple colorimetric labels may be detected simply by observing the color associated with the label. Thus, in various dipstick assays, conjugated gold often appears pink, while various conjugated beads appear the color of the bead.

Some assay formats do not require the use of labeled components. For instance, agglutination assays can be used to detect the presence of the target antibodies. In this case, antigen-coated particles are agglutinated by samples comprising the target antibodies. In this format, none of the components need be labeled and the presence of the target antibody is detected by simple visual inspection.

Assays for Compounds that Modulate Enzymatic Activity or Expression

The present invention also provides means for identifying compounds that bind to (e.g., substrates), and/or increase or decrease (i.e., modulate) the enzymatic activity of, catalytically active polypeptides of the present invention. The method comprises contacting a polypeptide of the present invention with a compound whose ability to bind to or modulate enzyme activity is to be determined. The

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polypeptide employed will have at least 20%, preferably at least 30% or 40%, more preferably at least 50% or 60%, and most preferably at least 70% or 80% of the specific activity of the native, full-length lignin biosynthesis polypeptide (e.g., enzyme). Generally, the polypeptide will be present in a range sufficient to determine the effect of the compound, typically about 1 nM to 10 μM. Likewise, the compound will be present in a concentration of from about 1 nM to 10 μM. Those of skill will understand that such factors as enzyme concentration, ligand concentrations (i.e., substrates, products, inhibitors, activators), pH, ionic strength, and temperature will be controlled so as to obtain useful kinetic data and determine the presence of absence of a compound that binds or modulates polypeptide activity. Methods of measuring enzyme kinetics is well known in the art. See, e.g., Segel, *Biochemical Calculations*, 2nd ed., John Wiley and Sons, New York (1976).

Although the present invention has been described in some detail by way of illustration and example for purposes of clarity of understanding, it will be obvious that certain changes and modifications may be practiced within the scope of the appended claims.

Example 1

This example describes the construction cDNA libraries.

Total RNA Isolation

Total RNA was isolated from corn tissues with TRIzol Reagent (Life Technology Inc. Gaithersburg, MD) using a modification of the guanidine isothiocyanate/acid-phenol procedure described by Chomczynski and Sacchi (Chomczynski, P., and Sacchi, N. Anal. Biochem. 162, 156 (1987)). In brief, plant tissue samples were pulverized in liquid nitrogen before the addition of the TRIzol Reagent, and then were further homogenized with a mortar and pestle. Addition of chloroform followed by centrifugation was conducted for separation of an aqueous phase and an organic phase. The total RNA was recovered by precipitation with isopropyl alcohol from the aqueous phase.

30 Poly(A) + RNA Isolation

The selection of poly(A)+ RNA from total RNA was performed using PolyATact system (Promega Corporation. Madison, WI). In brief, biotinylated

oligo(dT) primers were used to hybridize to the 3' poly(A) tails on mRNA. The hybrids were captured using streptavidin coupled to paramagnetic particles and a magnetic separation stand. The mRNA was washed at high stringent condition and eluted by RNase-free deionized water.

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cDNA Library Construction

cDNA synthesis was performed and unidirectional cDNA libraries were constructed using the SuperScript Plasmid System (Life Technology Inc. Gaithersburg, MD). The first stand of cDNA was synthesized by priming an oligo(dT) primer containing a Not I site. The reaction was catalyzed by SuperScript Reverse Transcriptase II at 45°C. The second strand of cDNA was labeled with alpha-32P-dCTP and a portion of the reaction was analyzed by agarose gel electrophoresis to determine cDNA sizes. cDNA molecules smaller than 500 base pairs and unligated adaptors were removed by Sephacryl-S400 chromatography. The selected cDNA molecules were ligated into pSPORT1 vector in between of Not I and Sal I sites.

Example 2

This example describes cDNA sequencing and library subtraction.

20 Sequencing Template Preparation

Individual colonies were picked and DNA was prepared either by PCR with M13 forward primers and M13 reverse primers, or by plasmid isolation. All the cDNA clones were sequenced using M13 reverse primers.

25 Q-bot Subtraction Procedure

cDNA libraries subjected to the subtraction procedure were plated out on 22 x 22 cm² agar plate at density of about 3,000 colonies per plate. The plates were incubated in a 37°C incubator for 12-24 hours. Colonies were picked into 384-well plates by a robot colony picker, Q-bot (GENETIX Limited). These plates were incubated overnight at 37°C.

Once sufficient colonies were picked, they were pinned onto 22 x 22 cm² nylon membranes using Q-bot. Each membrane contained 9,216 colonies or 36,864

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colonies. These membranes were placed onto agar plate with appropriate antibiotic. The plates were incubated at 37°C for overnight.

After colonies were recovered on the second day, these filters were placed on filter paper prewetted with denaturing solution for four minutes, then were incubated on top of a boiling water bath for additional four minutes. The filters were then placed on filter paper prewetted with neutralizing solution for four minutes. After excess solution was removed by placing the filters on dry filter papers for one minute, the colony side of the filters were place into Proteinase K solution, incubated at 37°C for 40-50 minutes. The filters were placed on dry filter papers to dry overnight. DNA was then cross-linked to nylon membrane by UV light treatment.

Colony hybridization was conducted as described by Sambrook, J., Fritsch, E.F. and Maniatis, T., (in Molecular Cloning: A laboratory Manual, 2nd Edition). The following probes were used in colony hybridization:

- 1. First strand cDNA from the same tissue as the library was made from to remove the most redundant clones.
- 2. 48-192 most redundant cDNA clones from the same library based on previous sequencing data.
- 3. 192 most redundant cDNA clones from previous sequencing in corn.
- A Sal-A20 oligo nucleotide: TCG ACC CAC GCG TCC GAA AAA AAA
 AAA AAA AAA, removes clones containing a poly A tail but no cDNA.
 - 5. cDNA clones derived from rRNA.

The image of the autoradiography was scanned into computer and the signal intensity and cold colony addresses of each colony was analyzed. Rearraying of cold-colonies from 384 well plates to 96 well plates was conducted using Q-bot.

Example 3

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This example describes the tissue and tissue treatment used for construction of cDNA libraries.

The polynucleotide having the DNA sequences given in SEQ ID NOS:19-36 were obtained from the sequencing of a library of cDNA clones prepared from maize. The library from which SEQ ID NO:19 was obtained was constructed from premeiotic to uninucleate tassel from line A632. The library from which SEQ ID

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NO:20 was obtained was constructed from a shoot culture from the maize line Crusader. The library from which SEQ ID NO:21 was obtained was constructed from immature ear of line AP9. The library from which SEQ ID NO:22 was obtained was constructed from tissue culture during induced apoptois of line BMS-P2#10. The library from which SEQ ID NO:23 was obtained was constructed from premeiotic to uninucleate tassel from line A632. The library from which SEQ ID NO:24 was obtained was constructed from early meiotic tassel (16-18 mm). The library from which SEQ ID NO:25 was obtained was constructed from corn root worm infested root roots of line B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:26 was obtained was constructed from immature ear of line AP9. The library from which SEQ ID NO:27 was obtained was constructed from scutelar node of germinating maize seeds of line B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:28 was obtained was constructed from B73 embryo 13 days after pollination. The library from which SEQ ID NO:29 was obtained was constructed from 8-hour heat shock recovery B73 seedling. The library from which SEQ ID NO:30 was obtained was constructed from corn root worm infested root roots of line B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:31 was obtained was constructed from shoot culture of line CM45. The library from which SEQ ID NO:32 was obtained was constructed from 8-hour heat shock recovery B73 seedling. The library from which SEQ ID NO:33 was obtained was constructed from root tips (less than 5mm in length) of B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:34 was obtained was constructed from green leaves of B73 treated with jasmonic acid. The library from which SEQ ID NO:35 was obtained was constructed from green leaves of B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:36 was obtained was constructed from immature ear of inbred B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:76 was obtained was constructed from ear leaf collar tissue after pollen shed from inbred B73. The library from which SEQ ID NO:77 was obtained was constructed from leaf collars for the ear leaf of inbred B73. The library was subject to a subtraction procedure as described in Example 2. The library from which SEQ ID NO:78 was obtained was constructed from a 7 cm. section of the whorl from B73 that had been previously infected with European corn borer (1st brood) at the V9 (nine node stage, vegetative growth) stage of development.

The above examples are provided to illustrate the invention but not to limit its scope. Other variants of the invention will be readily apparent to one of

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ordinary skill in the art and are encompassed by the appended claims. All publications, patents, and patent applications cited herein are hereby incorporated by reference.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a member selected from the group consisting of:
- 5 (a) a first polynucleotide having at least 60% identity to a second polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75, wherein said first polynucleotide encodes a polypeptide which when presented as an immunogen elicits the production of an antibody which is specifically reactive to said second polypeptide;
- 10 (b) a polynucleotide which is complementary to said first polynucleotide of (a); and
 - (c) a polynucleotide comprising at least 25 contiguous nucleotides from a first polynucleotide of (a) or a polynucleotide of (b).
- 15 2. The isolated nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said polynucleotide has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78.
 - 3. A recombinant expression cassette, comprising a nucleic acid of claim 1 operably linked to a promoter.
 - 4. The recombinant expression cassette of claim 3, wherein said nucleic acid is operably linked in antisense orientation to said promoter.
- 5. A host cell introduced with the recombinant expression cassette of claim 3.
 - 6. The host cell of claim 5, wherein said host cell is a sorghum (Sorghum bicolor) or maize (Zea mays) cell.
- 30 7. The isolated nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein the polynucleotide is DNA.

- 8. An isolated protein comprising a polypeptide of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by the isolated nucleic acid of claim 2.
- 9. The protein of claim 8, wherein said polypeptide has a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75.
 - 10. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide of at least 25 nucleotides in length which selectively hybridizes under stringent conditions to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78, or a complement thereof.
 - 11. The isolated nucleic acid of claim 10 operably linked to a promoter.
- 12. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide, said polynucleotide having at least 80% sequence identity to an identical length of selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 19-36 and 76-78 or a complement thereof.
- 13. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide having a sequence of a nucleic acid amplified from a Zea mays nucleic acid library using the primers selected from the group consisting of: 37-72 and 79-84 or complements thereof.
- 14. The isolated nucleic acid of claim 13, wherein said nucleic acid 25 library is a cDNA library.
 - 15. A recombinant expression cassette comprising a nucleic acid of claim 13 operably linked to a promoter.
- 30 16. A host cell comprising the recombinant expression cassette of claim 15.

- 17. A protein produced from the host cell of claim 16 by expressing said protein encoded by said nucleic acid.
- 18. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide wherein:
 - (a) said polypeptide comprises at least 10 contiguous amino acid residues from a first polypeptide selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOS: 1-18 and 73-75, and wherein said polypeptide, when presented as an immunogen, elicits the production of an antibody which specifically binds to said first polypeptide;
 - (b) said polypeptide does not bind to antisera raised against said first polypeptide which has been fully immunosorbed with said first polypeptide;
 - (c) said polypeptide has a molecular weight in non-glycosylated form within 10% of said first polypeptide.
- 19. A heterologous promoter operably linked to a non-isolated lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide encoded by the nucleic acid of claim 13.
- 20. A transgenic plant comprising a recombinant expression cassette comprising a plant promoter operably linked to an isolated nucleic acid of claim 1.
 - 21. The transgenic plant of claim 20, wherein said plant is Zea mays.
 - 22. A transgenic seed from the transgenic plant of claim 20.
 - 23. The transgenic seed of claim 22, wherein the seed is from Zea mays.
- 24. A method of modulating lignin biosynthesis in a plant, 30 comprising:
 - (a) transforming a plant cell with a recombinant expression cassette comprising a lignin biosynthesis polynucleotide operably linked to a promoter;

- (b) growing the plant cell under plant growing conditions; and
- (c) inducing expression of said polynucleotide for a time sufficient to modulate lignin biosynthesis in said plant.
- 25. The method of claim 24, wherein the plant is maize.
 - 26. The method of claim 24, wherein lignin biosynthesis is increased.

SEQUENCE LISTING

<110> Helentjaris, Timothy G. Bowen, Benjamin A. Wang, Xun

<120> Genes Encoding Enzymes for Lignin Biosynthesis and Uses Thereof

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	430					455					460				
465	vai	Asp	Arg	vai	Lys	Glu	Leu	тте	Lys		Lys	Gly	Phe	Gln	Val
	Dwo		<b>~</b> 1	<b>T</b>	470			_		475					480
PIO	PIO	ATA	GIU	Leu	GIU	Ala	Leu	Leu	Val	Ala	His	Pro	Ser	Ile	Ala
100			**- 3	485	_		_	_	490					495	
ASP	MIG	Aid	vai	val	Pro	Gln	Lys	Asp	Glu	Ala	Ala	Gly	Glu	Val	Pro
570.3	31-	Db -	500		_			505					510		
vai	AIA	Fne	vaı	vaı	Arg	Ala	Ala	Asp	Ala	Asp	Ile	Ala	Glu	Asp	Ala
		DID					520					ちつち			
TTG	TÀS	GIU	hue	IIe	Ser	Lys	Gln	Val	Val	Leu	Tyr	Lys	Arg	Ile	His
	230					535					540				
TAR	val	Tyr	Pue	Thr	Pro	Ser	Ile	Pro	Lys	Ser	Ala	Ser	Gly	Lys	Ile
343					550					555					560
Leu	Arg	Arg	GIU	Leu	Arg	Ala	Lys	Leu	Ala	Ala	Ala	Ala	Thr	Ala	
				565					570					575	

<210> 4 <211> 354 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

<400> 4 Met Ala Thr Ala Ile Val Pro Thr Asp Ala Glu Leu Leu Gln Ala Gln Ala Asp Leu Trp Arg His Ser Leu Tyr Tyr Leu Thr Ser Met Ala Leu Lys Cys Ala Val Glu Leu His Ile Pro Thr Ala Ile His Asn Leu Gly Gly Ser Ala Thr Leu Pro Asp Leu Val Ala Ala Leu Ser Leu Pro Ala Ala Lys Leu Pro Phe Leu Gly Arg Val Met Arg Leu Leu Val Thr Ser Gly Val Phe Ala Ser Ser Asp Asp Val Gln Tyr Arg Leu Asn Pro Leu Ser Trp Leu Leu Val Glu Gly Val Glu Ser Glu Asp His Thr Tyr Gln Lys Tyr Phe Val Leu Gly Thr Val Ser Arg His Tyr Val Glu Ala Gly Met Ser Leu Ala Asp Trp Phe Lys Lys Glu Glu Asp Glu Asp Arg Gln Leu Pro Ser Pro Phe Glu Ala Leu His Gly Val Pro Leu Val His Glu Ser Thr Lys Leu Leu Asp Glu Glu Leu Asp Arg Val Val Glu Gly Val Ala Ala His Asp Asn Leu Ala Ile Gly Thr Val Ile Arg Glu Cys Gly Ala Asp Val Phe Ser Gly Leu Arg Ser Leu Thr Tyr Cys Cys Gly Arg Gln Gly Asn Ala Ser Ala Ala Ala Ile Val Lys Ala Phe Pro Asp Ile Lys Cys Thr Val Leu Asn Leu Pro Arg Val Val Glu Glu Thr Thr Thr Lys Thr Ile Thr Ile Pro Pro Ala Gln Ala Val Met Leu Lys Leu Val Leu His Phe Trp Ser Asp Asp Cys Val Lys Ile Leu Glu Leu Cys Arg Lys Ala Ile Pro Ser Arg Gln Glu Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Ile Glu Ile Leu Leu Gly Pro Tyr Met Gly Pro Val Met Tyr Glu Ala Gln Leu Leu Met Asp Met Leu Met Met Val Asn Thr Lys Gly Arg Gln Arg Gly Glu Asp Asp Trp Arg His Ile Phe Thr Lys Ala Gly Phe Ser Asp Tyr Lys Val Val Lys Lys Ile Gly Ala Arg Gly Val Ile Glu Val 

Tyr Pro

<210> 5 <211> 375 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

<400> 5

Met Ala Leu Met Gln Glu Ser Ser Gln Asp Leu Leu Gln Ala His Asp Glu Leu Leu His His Ser Leu Cys Phe Ala Lys Ser Leu Ala Leu Ala Val Ala Leu Asp Leu Arg Ile Pro Asp Ala Ile His His Gly Ala Gly Gly Ala Thr Leu Leu Gln Ile Leu Ala Glu Thr Ala Leu His Pro Ser Lys Leu Arg Ala Leu Arg Arg Leu Met Arg Val Leu Thr Val Thr Gly Ile Phe Ser Val Val Glu Gln Pro Pro Ala Gly Gly Asp Asp Ser Thr Val His Thr Ser Asp Asp Glu Ala Val Val Tyr Arg Leu Thr Ala Ala Ser Arg Phe Leu Val Ser Asp Asp Val Ser Thr Ala Thr Leu Ala Pro Phe Val Ser Leu Ala Leu Gln Pro Ile Ala Ala Cys Pro His Ala Leu Gly Ile Ser Ala Trp Phe Arg Gln Glu Gln His Glu Pro Ser Pro Tyr Gly Leu Ala Phe Arg Gln Thr Pro Thr Ile Trp Glu His Ala Asp Asp Val Asn Ala Leu Leu Asn Lys Gly Met Ala Ala Asp Ser Arg Phe Leu Met Pro Ile Val Leu Arg Glu Cys Gly Glu Thr Phe Arg Gly Ile Asp Ser Leu Val Asp Val Gly Gly His Gly Gly Ala Ala Ala Ala Ala Ala Ala Phe Pro His Leu Lys Cys Ser Val Leu Asp Leu Pro His Val Val Ala Gly Ala Pro Ser Asp Gly Asn Val Gln Phe Val Ala Gly Asn Met Phe Glu Ser Ile Pro Pro Ala Thr Ala Val Phe Leu Lys Lys Thr Leu His Asp Trp Gly Asp Asp Glu Cys Val Lys Ile Leu Lys Asn Cys Lys Gln Ala Ile Ser Pro Arg Asp Ala Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Leu Asp Val Val Val Gly Tyr Lys Gln Ser Asn Ile Lys His Gln Glu Thr Gln Val Met Phe Asp Leu Tyr Met Met Ala Val 

Asn Gly Val Glu Arg Asp Glu Gln Glu Trp Lys Lys Ile Phe Thr Glu 340 345 Ala Gly Phe Lys Asp Tyr Lys Ile Leu Pro Val Ile Gly Asp Val Ser 360 Val Ile Ile Glu Val Tyr Pro <210> 6 <211> 370 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays <400> 6 Met Ala Leu Met Gln Glu Ser Ser Ser Gln Asp Gln Asp Met Leu Gln 5 10 Ala His Asp Glu Leu Leu His His Ser Leu Cys Phe Ala Lys Ser Leu 20 25 Ala Leu Thr Val Ala Leu Asp Leu Arg Ile Pro Asp Ala Ile His His 40 His Gly Gly Gly Ala Thr Leu Leu Gln Ile Leu Ala Glu Thr Gly Leu 55 His Pro Ser Lys Leu Arg Ala Leu Arg Arg Leu Met Arg Val Leu Thr 70 75 Val Thr Gly Thr Phe Ser Val Gln Val Gln Gln Pro Pro Ala Gly Ser 85 90 Asp Asp Asp Glu Ala Val Val Tyr Arg Leu Thr Ala Ala Ser Arg 100 105 Phe Leu Val Ser Asp Glu Val Ser Thr Ala Thr Thr Leu Ala Pro Phe 115 120 125 Val Ser Leu Ala Leu Gln Pro Ile Ala Ala Ser Pro His Ala Leu Gly 135 Ile Cys Ala Trp Phe Arg Gln Glu Gln His Glu Pro Ser Pro Tyr Gly 150 155 Leu Ala Phe Arg Gln Thr Pro Thr Leu Trp Glu His Ala Asp Asp Val 170 Asn Ala Leu Leu Asn Lys Gly Met Val Ala Asp Ser Arg Phe Leu Met 180 185 Pro Ile Val Leu Arg Gln Cys Gly Glu Met Phe Arg Gly Ile Asn Ser 200 205 Leu Val Asp Val Gly Gly His Gly Gly Ala Ala Ala Ala Ile Ala 215 220 Ala Ala Phe Pro His Val Lys Cys Ser Val Leu Asp Leu Pro His Val 225 230 235 Val Ala Gly Ala Pro Ser Asp Gly Asn Val Gln Phe Val Ala Gly Asn 245 250 Met Phe Glu Ser Ile Pro Pro Ala Thr Ala Val Phe Leu Lys Lys Thr

265

Leu His Asp Trp Gly Asp Asp Glu Cys Val Lys Ile Leu Lys Asn Cys 280

Lys Gln Ala Ile Pro Pro Arg Asp Ala Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Leu

295

270

285

9

Asp Val Val Val Gly Tyr Lys Gln Ser Asn Ile Lys His Gln Glu Thr 305
Gln Val Met Phe Asp Leu Tyr Met Met Ala Val Asn Gly Val Glu Arg 325
Asp Glu Gln Glu Trp Lys Lys Ile Phe Ala Glu Ala Gly Phe Lys Asp 340
Tyr Lys Ile Leu Pro Val Ile Gly Asp Val Ser Val Ile Ile Glu Val 355

Tyr Pro 370

<210> 7 <211> 366 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

<400> 7 Met Ala Leu Met Gln Glu Ser Ser Gln Asp Leu Leu Glu Ala His Asp Glu Leu Phe His His Cys Leu Cys Phe Ala Lys Ser Leu Ala Leu Ala 25 Val Ala Gln Asp Leu Arg Ile Pro Asp Ala Ile His His Gly Gly 40 Gly Ala Thr Leu His Gln Ile Leu Ala Glu Ala Ala Leu His Pro Ser Lys Leu Arg Ala Leu Arg Arg Leu Met Arg Val Leu Thr Val Ser Gly 70 75 Val Phe Thr Val Gln Tyr Ser Ser Thr Val Asp Ala Ser Asp Gly Ala 85 90 Asp Val Val Tyr Arg Leu Thr Ala Ala Ser Arg Phe Leu Val Ser Asp 105 110 Ser Asp Glu Ala Gly Thr Ala Ser Leu Ala Pro Phe Ala Asn Leu Ala 120 Leu His Pro Ile Ala Ile Ser Pro His Ala Val Gly Ile Cys Ala Trp 135 140 Phe Arg Gln Glu Gln His Asp Pro Ser Pro Tyr Gly Leu Ala Phe Arg 150 155 Gln Ile Pro Thr Ile Trp Glu His Ala Asp Asn Val Asn Ala Leu Leu 170 Asn Lys Gly Leu Leu Ala Glu Ser Arg Phe Leu Met Pro Ile Val Leu 180 185 190 Arg Glu Cys Gly Asp Glu Val Phe Arg Gly Ile Asp Ser Leu Val Asp 200 Val Gly Gly His Gly Gly Ala Ala Ala Thr Ile Ala Ala Ala Phe 215 220 Pro His Val Lys Cys Ser Val Leu Asp Leu Pro His Val Val Ala Gly 235 Ala Pro Ser Asp Ala Cys Val Gln Phe Val Ala Gly Asn Met Phe His 245 250 Ser Ile Pro Pro Ala Thr Ala Val Phe Phe Lys Thr Thr Leu Cys Asp 265

Trp Gly Asp Asp Glu Cys Ile Lys Ile Leu Lys Asn Cys Lys Gln Ala Ile Ser Pro Arg Asp Glu Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Met Asp Val Val Val Gly Tyr Gly Gln Ser Asn Met Lys Arg Leu Glu Thr Gln Val Met Phe Asp Leu Val Met Met Ala Val Asn Gly Val Glu Arg Asp Glu Gln Glu Trp Lys Glu Met Phe Ile Glu Ala Gly Phe Lys Asp Tyr Lys Ile Arg Pro Val Ala Gly Leu Met Ser Val Ile Glu Val Tyr Pro 

<210> 8 <211> 505 <212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

<400> 8 Met Val Leu Leu Phe Val Glu Lys Leu Leu Val Gly Leu Leu Ala Ser Val Met Val Ala Ile Ala Val Ser Lys Ile Arg Gly Arg Lys Leu Arg Leu Pro Pro Gly Pro Val Pro Val Pro Val Phe Gly Asn Trp Leu Gln Val Gly Asp Asp Leu Asn His Arg Asn Leu Ala Ala Leu Ser Arg Lys Phe Gly Asp Val Phe Leu Leu Arg Met Gly Gln Arg Asn Leu Val Val Val Ser Ser Pro Pro Leu Ala Arg Glu Val Leu His Thr Gln Gly Val Glu Phe Gly Ser Arg Thr Arg Asn Val Val Phe Asp Ile Phe Thr Asp Lys Gly Gln Asp Met Val Phe Thr Val Tyr Gly Asp His Trp Arg Lys Met Arg Arg Ile Met Thr Val Pro Phe Phe Thr Asn Lys Val Val Gln Gln Tyr Arg His Gly Trp Glu Ala Glu Ala Ala Val Val Asp Asp Val Arg Leu Asp Pro Lys Ala Ala Thr Asp Gly Ile Val Leu Arg Arg Arg Leu Gln Leu Met Met Tyr Asn Asn Val Tyr Arg Ile Met Phe Asp Arg Arg Phe Glu Ser Met Asp Asp Pro Leu Phe Leu Arg Leu Arg Ala Leu Asn Gly Glu Arg Ser Arg Leu Ala Gln Ser Phe Glu Tyr Asn Tyr Gly Asp Phe Ile Pro Ile Leu Arg Pro Phe Leu Arg Gly Tyr Leu Arg Val Cys Lys Glu Val Lys Glu Thr Arg Leu Lys Leu Phe Lys Asp Phe 

11

			200					フムち	Ser						
		2/3					<b>781</b> 1		Ile			200	Gln		
	230					245			Phe		200	Glu			
200					-31U				Ser	215	Glu				
				323					Gln 330	Lys					
			340					345	Ile					Thr	
		333					4611	Ile	Lys			200	Arg		
	3,0					3/2	Pro		Met		200	His			
303					390	Pro			Ser	305	Ile				
				403	Asn				Trp 410	Arg				435	
			420					475	Lys				400		
		433					440	Gly	Val			4 4 E			
	450					455	Ile		Gly		400	Ile			
TUJ					4/0				Pro	175	Gln				
Thr	Thr	Glu	Lys	Gly 485	Gly	Gln	Phe	Ser	Leu 490	His	Ile	Leu	Lys		480 Ser
Thr	Ile	Val	Cys 500	Lys	Pro	Arg	Thr	<b>Leu</b> 505						495	
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<210> 9

<211> 501

<212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

<400> 9

 Met
 Asp
 Leu
 Ala
 Leu
 Glu
 Lys
 Ala
 Leu
 Leu
 Gly
 Leu
 Phe
 Ala
 Ala
 Ala
 Ala
 Ala
 Leu
 Ala
 Leu
 Thr
 Gly
 Lys
 Arg
 Tyr
 Arg
 A

			700					105					110		Gly
		TID					120	Val	Tyr			125	Trp		Lys
	T20				Thr	135	Pro				140	Lys			
143					T20					155	Leu				Asp 160
				TOD	Glu				170					175	Arg
			TRO		Met			185					100	Phe	_
		132			Glu		200					205		_	
	210				Ser	215					220				_
225					Val 230					235					240
				245	Lys				250					255	•
			200		Lys			265					272		_
		2/5			Ile		280					285			
	290				Tyr	295					300				
305					Ser 310					315					220
				325	His				330					225	
			340		Val			345					250		_
		333			Lys		360					365			
	370				Met Ser	3/5					3 ይ በ				
202					390 Trp					395					400
				405	Lys				410					4 1 E	
			420		Val			425					430		
		433			Gly		440					445			
	<b>430</b>				Pro	455					460				
105					470 Asn					475					400
			Glu	485			**6	UT O	490	urs	ATG	THE	тте	Val 495	cys
-															

<210> 10 <211> 370 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

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14

340 345 350

Ile Gly Asn Thr Leu Asn Ala Ala Ser Leu Gly Ser Ser Pro Val Pro
355 360 365

Ala Leu
370

<210> 11 <211> 359 <212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

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15

305 310 315 320
Ala Glu Val Glu Val Ile Lys Met Asp Tyr Val Asn Thr Ala Met Glu
325 330 335

Arg Leu Glu Lys Asn Asp Val Arg Tyr Arg Phe Val Ile Asp Val Ala
340 345 355

Gly Ser Leu Gly Ser Ala Ala
355

<210> 12 <211> 358 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

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Ala Ala Ala Gly Thr Leu Asp Gly Val Ile Asp Thr Val Ser Ala Asp 255

His Pro Val Val Pro Leu Leu Asp Leu Leu Lys Pro Met Gly Gln Met 260

Val Val Val Gly Leu Pro Thr Lys Pro Leu Gln Val Pro Ala Phe Ser 275

Leu Val Ala Gly Gly Lys Arg Val Ala Gly Ser Ala Gly Gly Val

Leu Gly Ala Asp Ala Phe Leu Val Ser Arg Asp Pro Glu Gln Met Arg

230

16

295 300 Gly Glu Cys Gln Ala Met Leu Asp Phe Ala Gly Glu His Gly Ile Thr 315 310 Ala Asp Val Glu Val Val Gly Met Asp Tyr Val Asn Thr Ala Ile Gln 325 330 Arg Leu Glu Arg Asn Asp Val Arg Tyr Arg Phe Val Val Asp Val Ala 340 345 Gly Ser Lys Ile Gly Gly 355

<210> 13 <211> 258 <212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

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<210> 14 <211> 248 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

<400> 14 Met Ala Ser Ala Gly Ala Gly Glu Gly Lys Glu Thr Ala Ala Gly Ser 10 1 " Ser Leu His Ser Lys Thr Leu Leu Lys Ser Gln Pro Leu Tyr Gln Tyr 25 Ile Leu Glu Ser Thr Val Phe Pro Arg Glu Pro Asp Cys Leu Arg Glu 40 Leu Arg Val Ala Thr Ala Thr His Pro Met Ala Gly Met Ala Ala Ser 55 Pro Asp Glu Val Gln Leu Leu Gln Leu Leu Ile Glu Ile Leu Gly Ala 70 75 Lys Asn Ala Ile Glu Val Gly Val Phe Thr Gly Tyr Ser Leu Leu Ala 90 85 Thr Ala Leu Ala Leu Pro Asp Asp Gly Lys Ile Val Ala Ile Asp Val 105 100 Thr Arg Glu Ser Tyr Asp Gln Ile Gly Ser Pro Val Ile Glu Lys Ala 115 120 125 Gly Val Ala His Lys Ile Asp Phe Arg Val Gly Leu Ala Leu Pro Val 135 140 Leu Asp Gln Met Val Ala Glu Glu Gly Asn Lys Gly Lys Phe Asp Phe 155 150 Ala Phe Val Asp Ala Asp Lys Val Asn Phe Leu Asn Tyr His Glu Arg 165 170 Leu Leu Gln Leu Leu Arg Val Gly Gly Leu Ile Ala Tyr Asp Asn Thr 180 185 Leu Trp Gly Gly Ser Val Ala Ala Ser Pro Asp Glu Pro Leu Ser Glu 200 Arg Asp Arg Ala Leu Ala Ala Ala Thr Arg Glu Phe Asn Ala Ala Val 215 220 Ala Ala Asp Pro Arg Val His Val Cys Gln Val Ala Ile Ala Asp Gly 230 235 Leu Thr Leu Cys Arg Arg Val Ala

> <210> 15 <211> 248 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

245

<400> 15

 Met
 Ala
 Ala
 Gly
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 Asp
 Asp
 Thr
 Thr
 Ile
 Ala
 Gln
 Val
 His
 Ser
 Gly

 1
 5
 5
 10
 10
 15
 15

 Ile
 Asp
 Ser
 Asp
 Asp
 Thr
 Leu
 Leu
 Leu
 Lys
 Ser
 Glu
 Ala
 Leu
 Tyr
 Lys

 Tyr
 Val
 Leu
 Asp
 Thr
 Ser
 Val
 Leu
 Pro
 His
 Glu
 Pro
 Glu
 Ser
 Met
 Arg

 35
 40
 45
 45
 45
 Arg
 <

18

Glu Leu Arg Leu Val Thr Asp Lys His Glu Trp Gly Phe Met Gln Ser 55 Ser Pro Asp Glu Ala Ser Leu Leu Arg Met Leu Ile Lys Leu Ser Gly 70 Ala Arg Arg Thr Leu Glu Val Gly Val Phe Thr Gly Tyr Ser Leu Leu 85 90 Ala Thr Ala Leu Ala Leu Pro Ala Asp Gly Lys Val Ile Ala Phe Asp 105 Val Ser Arg Glu Tyr Tyr Asp Ile Gly Arg Pro Phe Ile Glu Arg Ala 120 Gly Val Ala Gly Lys Val Asp Phe Arg Glu Gly Pro Ala Leu Glu Gln 135 140 Leu Asp Glu Leu Leu Ala Asp Pro Ala Asn His Gly Ala Phe Asp Phe 150 155 Ala Phe Val Asp Ala Asp Lys Pro Asn Tyr Val Arg Tyr His Glu Gln 170 Leu Leu Arg Leu Val Arg Val Gly Gly Thr Val Val Tyr Asp Asn Thr 180 185 190 Leu Trp Ala Gly Thr Val Ala Leu Pro Pro Asp Ala Pro Leu Ser Asp 200 195 205 Leu Asp Arg Arg Phe Ser Ala Ala Ile Arg Glu Leu Asn Val Arg Leu 215 220 Ser Gln Asp Pro Arg Val Glu Val Cys Gln Leu Ala Ile Ala Asp Gly 230 Val Thr Ile Cys Arg Arg Val Val 245

<210> 16 <211> 371 <212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

<400> 16 Met Thr Val Val Asp Ala Val Val Ser Ser Thr Asp Ala Gly Ala Pro 10 Ala Ala Ala Thr Ala Val Pro Ala Gly Asn Gly Gln Thr Val Cys Val Thr Gly Ala Ala Gly Tyr Ile Ala Ser Trp Leu Val Lys Leu Leu 40 Leu Glu Lys Gly Tyr Thr Val Lys Gly Thr Val Arg Asn Pro Asp Asp 55 60 Pro Lys Asn Ala His Leu Lys Ala Leu Asp Gly Ala Ala Glu Arg Leu 70 75 Ile Leu Cys Lys Ala Asp Leu Leu Asp Tyr Asp Ala Ile Cys Arg Ala 90 Val Gln Gly Cys Gln Gly Val Phe His Thr Ala Ser Pro Val Thr Asp 100 105 Asp Pro Glu Gln Met Val Glu Pro Ala Val Arg Gly Thr Glu Tyr Val 115 120 125 Ile Asn Ala Ala Ala Asp Ala Gly Thr Val Arg Arg Val Val Phe Thr 135

19

Ser Ser Ile Gly Ala Val Thr Met Asp Pro Lys Arg Gly Pro Asp Val 150 155 Val Val Asp Glu Ser Cys Trp Ser Asp Leu Glu Phe Cys Glu Lys Thr 170 165 175 Arg Asn Trp Tyr Cys Tyr Gly Lys Ala Val Ala Glu Gln Ala Ala Trp 185 180 Glu Thr Ala Arg Arg Arg Gly Val Asp Leu Val Val Val Asn Pro Val 200 Leu Val Val Gly Pro Leu Leu Gln Ala Thr Val Asn Ala Ser Ile Ala 215 220 His Ile Leu Lys Tyr Leu Asp Gly Ser Ala Arg Thr Phe Ala Asn Ala 230 235 Val Gln Ala Tyr Val Asp Val Arg Asp Val Ala Asp Ala His Leu Arg 250 245 Val Phe Glu Ser Pro Arg Ala Ser Gly Arg Xaa Leu Cys Ala Glu Arg 265 Val Leu His Arg Glu Asp Val Val Arg Ile Leu Ala Lys Leu Phe Pro 280 285 Glu Tyr Pro Val Pro Ala Arg Cys Ser Asp Glu Val Asn Pro Arg Lys 295 300 290 Gln Pro Tyr Lys Phe Ser Asn Gln Lys Leu Arg Asp Leu Gly Leu Gln 315 310 Phe Arg Pro Val Ser Gln Ser Leu Tyr Asp Thr Val Lys Asn Leu Gln 325 330 Glu Lys Gly His Leu Pro Val Leu Gly Glu Arg Thr Thr Glu Ala 345 Ala Asp Lys Asp Ala Pro Thr Ala Glu Met Gln Gln Gly Gly Ile Ala 360 355 Ile Arg Ala 370

<210> 17

<211> 177

<212> PRT

<213> Zea mays

<400> 17

Thr Arg Pro Val Val Gly Leu Asp Arg Asn Val Ser Glu Ser Asp Leu 10 Asp Arg Leu Pro Phe Leu Arg Cys Val Ile Lys Glu Thr Leu Arg Leu 25 20 His Pro Pro Ile Pro Leu Leu His Glu Thr Ala Asp Asp Cys Val Val Ala Gly Tyr Ser Val Pro Arg Gly Ser Arg Val Met Val Asn Val 55 60 Trp Ala Ile Gly Arg His Arg Ala Ser Trp Lys Asp Ala Asp Ala Phe 70 Arg Pro Ser Arg Phe Ala Ala Pro Glu Gly Glu Ala Ala Gly Leu Asp 90 85 Phe Lys Gly Gly Cys Phe Glu Phe Leu Pro Phe Gly Ser Gly Arg Arg 105

20

 Ser
 Cys
 Pro
 Gly
 Met
 Ala
 Leu
 Gly
 Leu
 Tyr
 Ala
 Leu
 Gly
 Leu
 Ala
 Val

 Ala
 Gly
 Gly
 Gly
 Gly
 Met
 Gly
 Met
 Lys
 Leu
 Fro
 Asp
 Gly
 Met
 Lys
 Lys

<210> 18 <211> 235 <212> PRT <213> Zea mays

<400> 18

Ala Arg Asp Phe Pro Asp Gly Pro Pro Pro Ser Gly Thr Ala Met Ser 10 Val Gly Thr Lys Leu Asn Lys Leu Ser Tyr Asn Ser Val Val Glu Ile 20 25 Val Leu Gln Asn Pro Ala Ala Val Pro Thr Glu Asn His Pro Ile His 40 Leu His Gly Phe Asn Phe Phe Val Leu Ala Gln Gly Met Gly Thr Phe 55 Ala Pro Gly Ser Val Ala Tyr Asn Leu Val Asp Pro Val Ala Arg Asn 70 75 Thr Ile Ala Val Pro Gly Gly Gly Trp Ala Val Ile Arg Phe Val Ala 85 90 Asn Asn Pro Gly Met Trp Phe Phe His Cys His Leu Asp Pro His Val 100 105 110 Pro Met Gly Leu Gly Met Val Phe Gln Val Asp Ser Gly Thr Thr Pro 115 120 125 Gly Ser Thr Leu Pro Thr Pro Pro Gly Asp Trp Val Gly Val Cys Asp 135 140 Ala Gln His Tyr Ala Ala Ala Ala Ala Val Ala Ala Pro Val Pro 150 155 Val Pro Ala Pro Ala Pro Val Pro Ala Pro Ile Leu Ala Pro Ala Pro 170 Ala Glu Ser Pro Leu Pro Pro Pro Arg Ala Val Asp His Lys Pro Ser 185 Pro Asn Leu Pro Gln Arg Arg Glu His Thr Gly Thr Ser Asn Ser Ala 200 205 Ala Gly Arg Arg Ala Lys Gly His Leu Ala Cys Phe Leu Cys Ser Val 215 Leu Leu Phe Phe Leu Leu Arg Gln His Lys Ala 230

> <210> 19 <211> 1924

<212> DNA

<213> Zea mays

<220> <221> CDS

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gag t Glu S	ct (	gag Glu 15	gag Glu	gag Glu	<b>c</b> ac His	atc Ile	ttc Phe 20	) Arg	agc Ser	cgg Arg	ttc Phe	ccg Pro 25	ccc Pro	gtg Val	gcc Ala	99
gta c Val P	ro a 30	gac Asp	gac Asp	gtc Val	acc Thr	gtg Val 35	ccg Pro	gag Glu	ttc Phe	gtg Val	ctg Leu 40	gcg Ala	gac Asp	gcc Ala	gag Glu	147
gcc t Ala T 45	ac (	gcg Ala	gac Asp	aag Lys	acg Thr 50	gcg Ala	ctc Leu	gtg Val	gag Glu	gcc Ala 55	gcg Ala	ccg Pro	ggt Gly	ggc Gly	cgg Arg 60	195
tcc t Ser T																243
gcg c Ala I	etg Leu	egg Arg	tcc Ser 80	atc Ile	ggc Gly	gtc Val	cgc Arg	agg Arg 85	ggc Gly	cac His	gtc Val	gtg Val	gtg Val 90	gtc Val	gcg Ala	291
ctc c Leu F																339
gcc g Ala G																387
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gcg (																483
atc (				Ala					Ála					Ğlü		531

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gg G1 36	y Se	g gc r Al	g gt a Va	g ca 1 Gl	g gt n Va 37	l Al	c aa a Ly	g aad s Ly	g aa s Ly	g to s Se 37	r Va	c gg 1 Gl	c tto y Pho	c ato	e Leu 380	1155

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		Āsp			gcg Ala											1587
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tc1 Se:	t ca r Gl	a gt n Va 50	1 Th	c gad	g gat u Asj	gaç Gli	3 ato 1 Ilo 51	e Ly:	g caa s Gl	a tte n Ph	c gt e Va	c gcc 1 Al: 51	а гу:	g gad s Gl	g gtg ı Val	1709
gt: Va	t tt 1 Ph 52	е Ту	c aa r Ly	g aa s Ly	g ato s Ilo	c cade His	s Ly	g gt s Va	c tt l Ph	c tt e Ph	c ac e Th 53	r GI	a tco u Se	c at r Il	c ccc e Pro	1757
aa Ly	g aa s As	c cc	g to	g gg r Gl	c aa y Ly	g at s Il	c ct e Le	g ag u Ar	g aa g Ly	g ga s As	c tt p Le	g ag u Ar	a gc g Al	c ag a Ar	g ctc g Leu	1805

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535	540	545	550

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95

390

85

90

aac too gto gag tto gtg oto goo tto tto ggo gog too tto cto ggo

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Asn	Ser	Val	Glu	Phe 105	Val	Leu	Ala	Phe	Phe 110	Gly	Ala	Ser	Phe	Leu 115	Gly		
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	Gln		agc Ser														486
			aag Lys														534
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	. wo	99/104	98			_			29	•			PC	T/US9	8/17519	•
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Ala Thr Ala Ile Val Pro Thr Asp Ala Glu Leu Leu Gln Ala Gln Ala 5 10 15	
	154
gac ctg tgg cgc cac agc ctc tac tac ctg aca tcc atg gcg ctc aag Asp Leu Trp Arg His Ser Leu Tyr Tyr Leu Thr Ser Met Ala Leu Lys	154 202

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gtc Val	ttc Phe	gcg Ala	tcg Ser 85	tcc Ser	gac Asp	gac Asp	gtg Val	cag Gln 90	tac Tyr	cgg Arg	ctg Leu	aac Asn	ccg Pro 95	ctg Leu	tcc Ser	34	16
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ccg Pro	tcg Ser	ccg Pro	ttc Phe	gag Glu 150	gcc Ala	ctg Leu	cac His	Gly	gtg Val 155	ccc Pro	ctc Leu	gtc Val	cac His	gag Glu 160	agc Ser	53	38
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gcc Ala	gcg Ala	cac His 180	gac Asp	aac Asn	ctg Leu	gcc Ala	atc Ile 185	ggg	acc Thr	gtc Val	ata Ile	cgg Arg 190	gag Glu	tgc Cys	ggc Gly	63	34
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260 265 270 agg aag gcc atc cct tcc cgc caa gaa gga ggg aag gtg atc atc att 922 Arg Lys Ala Ile Pro Ser Arg Gln Glu Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Ile 280 gag ata ctc ctg ggc ccg tac atg ggg ccg gtc atg tac gag gcc cag Glu Ile Leu Leu Gly Pro Tyr Met Gly Pro Val Met Tyr Glu Ala Gln 970 ctg ctg atg gac atg ctc atg atg gtg aac acc aag ggc agg cag cgc Leu Leu Met Asp Met Leu Met Met Val Asn Thr Lys Gly Arg Gln Arg 1018 ggc gaa gac gac tgg cgc cac atc ttt acc aag gct ggc ttc tcc gac 1066 Gly Glu Asp Asp Trp Arg His Ile Phe Thr Lys Ala Gly Phe Ser Asp 325 tac aag gtt gtc aag aaa atc gga gct cgt ggt gtc atc gag gtc tac Tyr Lys Val Val Lys Lys Ile Gly Ala Arg Gly Val Ile Glu Val Tyr 1114 cca tgatccatga tcgatgtcat gtgactgtga gaggacgata ctgtacaatt 1167 aaataaacgg ggtatctagc tactactcag cttttgtacc tcgagatcca tgcatgttaa 1227 ttacttgctt ccatctgttt tcaaaatgca tctatgtaat gt 1269 <210> 23 <211> 1412 <212> DNA <213> Zea mays <220> <221> CDS <222> (139)...(1263) <400> 23 gtcgacccac gcgtccgcca ggttccattc gtctctgcag tctcacccac aagagacaca 60 aacctagege aacaagcaat egaaaaagag atttggetae aaccaattaa ceattggeea 120 gcagtgtacg tgggaacg atg gcc ctc atg cag gag agt agt agc cag gat 171 Met Ala Leu Met Gln Glu Ser Ser Ser Gln Asp ttg ctc caa gct cac gac gag ctc ttg cac cat tcc ctg tgc ttc gcc 219 Leu Leu Gln Ala His Asp Glu Leu Leu His His Ser Leu Cys Phe Ala 15 aaa tog oto gog oto goo gtg gog otg gac oto ogo ato oco gac gog 267 Lys Ser Leu Ala Leu Ala Val Ala Leu Asp Leu Arg Ile Pro Asp Ala 30 35 atc cac cac cac ggg gcc ggc gcc acc ctt ctc cag atc ctc gcc 315

	•••					50					55				Ala	
60		nia	Deu	urs	65	Ser	Lys	Leu	Arg	A1a 70	Leu	Arg	Arg	Leu	atg Met 75	363
5				80	1111	Gly	116	Pne	ser 85	vai	Val	Glu	Gln	Pro 90		411
	Cly	GLY	95	vsh	ASP	ser	THE	100	HIS	Thr	Ser	Asp	<b>Asp</b> 105	Glu	gct Ala	459
		110	-,-	*****	Deu	****	115	AId	ser	Arg	Phe	ctc Leu 120	Val	Ser	Asp	507
	125	501	****	NIG	1111	130	Ата	Pro	Pne	Val	Ser 135	ctg Leu	Ala	Leu	Gln	555
140				Cys	145	1112	ALG	Leu	GIY	150	Ser	gcg Ala	Trp	Phe	Arg 155	603
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			175			1114	nsþ	180	val	ASN	Ата	ttg Leu	Leu 185	Asn	Lys	699
		190			Der	ALG	195	Leu	мет	Pro	Ile	gtg Val 200	Leu	Arg	Glu	747
-	205				*****	210	116	ASP	ser	Leu	va1 215	gac Asp	Val	Gly	Gly	795
220		-4	2		225	nia	TIIT	TIE	ATS	230	Ala	ttc Phe	Pro	His	Leu 235	843
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gat ggc aac gtg cag ttc gtc gca ggc aat atg ttt gag agt att cca Asp Gly Asn Val Gln Phe Val Ala Gly Asn Met Phe Glu Ser Ile Pro 255 260 265	939
Pro Ala Thr Ala Val Phe Leu Lys Lys Thr Leu His Asp Trp Gly Asp 270 275 280	987
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cgg gat gca ggt ggg aag gta ata atc ttg gat gtg gta gtt gga tat Arg Asp Ala Gly Gly Lys Val Ile Ile Leu Asp Val Val Val Gly Tyr 300 315	1083
aaa cag tca aac ata aag cat caa gag aca caa gtt atg ttt gat ttg Lys Gln Ser Asn Ile Lys His Gln Glu Thr Gln Val Met Phe Asp Leu 320 325 330	1131
tat atg atg gcg gtt aac gga gtt gag cgt gac gag caa gag tgg aag Tyr Met Met Ala Val Asn Gly Val Glu Arg Asp Glu Gln Glu Trp Lys 335 340 345	1179
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att ggt gat gta tcg gtc atc atc gag gtc tat cct tgaatgcttt Ile Gly Asp Val Ser Val Ile Ile Glu Val Tyr Pro 365 370 375	1273
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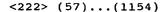
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acc Thr 35	gtg Val	gcg Ala	ctg Leu	gac Asp	ctc Leu 40	cgc Arg	atc Ile	cca Pro	gac Asp	gcc Ala 45	atc Ile	cac His	cac His	cac His	ggc Gly 50		200
ggc Gly	ggc Gly	gcc Ala	acc Thr	ctt Leu 55	ctc Leu	cag Gln	atc Ile	ctc Leu	gcg Ala 60	gag Glu	act Thr	ggg Gly	ctc Leu	cac His 65	cca Pro		248
agc Ser	aag Lys	ctt Leu	cgc Arg 70	gcc Ala	cta Leu	cgc Arg	cgc Arg	ctc Leu 75	atg Met	cgc Arg	gtg Val	ctc Leu	acc Thr 80	gtc Val	acg Thr		296
ggc Gly	acc Thr	ttc Phe 85	agc Ser	gtc Val	cag Gln	gtc Val	cag Gln 90	caa Gln	cca Pro	cca Pro	gcc Ala	ggt Gly 95	agt Ser	gac Asp	gac Asp		344
gac Asp	gaa Glu 100	gct Ala	gtc Val	gtc Val	gtc Val	tac Tyr 105	agg Arg	ctg Leu	aca Thr	gca Ala	gcc Ala 110	tcc Ser	cgc Arg	ttc Phe	ctc Leu		392
gtc Val 115	agc Ser	gac Asp	gag Glu	gtg Val	agc Ser 120	acg Thr	gca Ala	aca Thr	acc Thr	ttg Leu 125	gct Ala	ccc Pro	ttt Phe	gtg Val	agc Ser 130		440
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gtg Val 195	Leu	agg Arg	cag Gln	tgc Cys	ggc Gly 200	gag Glu	atg Met	ttt Phe	cgt Arg	ggg Gly 205	atc Ile	aac Asn	tca Ser	ttg Leu	gtt Val 210		680

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gcc Ala	ata Ile	cct Pro	cca Pro	cgg Arg 295	gat Asp	gca Ala	ggt Gly	gga Gly	aag Lys 300	gta Val	ata Ile	atc Ile	ttg Leu	gac Asp 305	gtg Val	968
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caa Gln	gag Glu 340	tgg Trp	aag Lys	aag Lys	atc Ile	ttc Phe 345	gcc Ala	gaa Glu	gcc Ala	gga Gly	ttc Phe 350	aaa Lys	gac Asp	tac Tyr	aaa Lys	1112
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agge	egete tttgi	ggt a taa 1	tatga	catta	aa ga	aatt	gttco	: ttt	ttat	ttac	taat	taaad gtgct	ect a	aggat aacct	tgtga ttgga	1220 1280 1315
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										atc Ile 220						731
										cac His						779
										ggc Gly						827
										aca Thr						875
										aat Asn						923
										atc Ile 300						971
										gag Glu						1019
-	_	_	_	-		-			_	gag Glu	_	_			, ,	1067
			Met							aaa Lys						1115
		Ala					Val			gtc Val		Pro		attc	ttt	1164
agc	gtgt	tgt	tttt	taga	gc c ct a tg t	ctag	tata gcac	a ac t tg	tgaa agcc	gacc tctg	acg aga	acgt attt	cgt gta	catg ataa	gagctg taaata	1224 1284 1306

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atc Ile	gtg Val	ctc Leu	cgc Arg 175	cga Arg	cgc Arg	ctg Leu	cag Gln	ctc Leu 180	atg Met	atg Met	tac Tyr	aac Asn	aac Asn 185	gta Val	tac Tyr	640
			ttc Phe													688
			agg Arg													736
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			ctc Leu													832
ctc Leu	ttc Phe	aag Lys	gat Asp 255	ttc Phe	ttc Phe	ctc Leu	gag Glu	gag Glu 260	agg Arg	aag Lys	aag Lys	ctg Leu	gcg Ala 265	agc Ser	acc Thr	880
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			cag Gln													976
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gag Glu	ccg Pro	gac Asp	acg Thr	cac His	aac Asn	ctc Leu	ccc Pro	tac Tyr	ctg Leu	cag Gln	gcg Ala	gtg Val	atc Ile	aag Lys	gag Glu	1168

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	c cgc ctc gtc Arg Leu Val 465					1504
cag gac aag Gln Asp Lys	g gtn gac acc s Xaa Asp Thr 480	acc gag aad Thr Glu Lys	g gga ggc s Gly Gly 485	cag ttc agt Gln Phe Ser	ctc cac Leu His 490	1552
	g cat tcc acc s His Ser Thr 495		s Lys Pro			1594
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CCC aag agg to Pro Lys Arg Ti 405	gg gtg cgc rp Val Arg	ccc gac gag Pro Asp Glu 410	ttc cgg Phe Arg	ccc gag co Pro Glu Ar 415	gc ttc ctg rg Phe Leu	1306
gag gag gag aa Glu Glu Glu Ly 420	As ser Agi	GIU AIA His 425	Gly Asn	Asp Phe Ar	g Phe Val	1354
ccc ttt ggg gt Pro Phe Gly Va 435	tc ggc cgc al Gly Arg 440	cgg agc tgc Arg Ser Cys	cct ggg Pro Gly 445	atc atc ct Ile Ile Le	c gcg ctg au Ala Leu 450	1402
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45 gcg ttg gcg ctc gcg gcg cac gac gcc tcc

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	30			9	ш	35	Gly	ASD	ASP	ASP	40	Ala	Ile	Gln	ata Ile	266
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tgg Trp	aag Lys	aac Asn	gcc Ala	aac Asn 65	tac Tyr	cct Pro	gtt Val	gtc Val	cct Pro 70	ggg	cac His	gag Glu	atc Ile	gcc Ala 75		362
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gat Asp	gct Ala	aac Asn	cag Gln 240	atg Met	aag Lys	gct Ala	gcg Ala	aag Lys 245	ggc Gly	aca Thr	atg Met	gat Asp	ggc Gly 250	att Ile	atg Met	890
aac Asn	acg [*] Thr	gcc Ala 255	tct Ser	gca Ala	agc Ser	atg Met	tcc Ser 260	atg Met	tac Tyr	gct Ala	tac Tyr	ctt Leu 265	gct Ala	ctc Leu	ctc Leu	938
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ALG	aag Lys	urs	320	rea	Ala	ALA	Asp	325	Glu	Leu	Ile	Gly	Thr 330	Glu	Glu	1130
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tcg Ser 365	ccg Pro	gtc Val	cca Pro	gct Ala	ctg Leu 370	tago	tgeg	igc a	cttg	ıttga	it ca	acaa	atgo	;		1274
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aag Lys	aac Asn 55	gac Asp	tgg Trp	cga Arg	aac Asn	gcc Ala 60	atg Met	tac Tyr	cca Pro	gtc Val	gtc Val 65	ccg Pro	ggg Gly	cac His	gag Glu	366
atc Ile 70	gtg Val	ggc Gly	gtt Val	gtg Val	acc Thr 75	ggc Gly	gtc Val	ggc Gly	ggc Gly	ggc 80	gtc Val	acg Thr	cgg Arg	ttc Phe	aag Lys 85	414
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gtc Val 150	ccc Pro	gac Asp	ggc Gly	ctg Leu	gcg Ala 155	ctg Leu	gac Asp	cgc Arg	acc Thr	gcg Ala 160	ccg Pro	ctg Leu	ctc Leu	tgc Cys	gcc Ala 165	654
ggc Gly	gtc Val	acc Thr	gtg Val	tac Tyr	agc Ser	ccc Pro	atg Met	atg Met	cgc Arg	cac His	ggc Gly	ctc Leu	aac Asn	gag Glu	ccc Pro	702

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		Val					Val	ggc Gly								1086
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cac His	ctc Leu	tcc Ser 20	cct Pro	tac Tyr	cac His	ttc Phe	tca Ser 25	cgg Arg	agg Arg	gtt Val	cag Gln	aga Arg 30	gac Asp	gac Asp	gac Asp		156
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		_	245			ggc Gly	vai	250	ASP	THE	vaı	ser	Ala 255	Asp	His	828
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ggc gag Gly Glu 20									271
		ctc tac Leu Tyr 40			Asp T				319
		agc atg Ser Met							367
		atg acg Met Thr		Ala Asp					415
atg ctc Met Leu 85	atc aag Ile Lys	ctc atc Leu Ile	ggc gcc Gly Ala 90	aag aad Lys Lys	Thr M	tg gag let Glu 95	atc ggc Ile Gly	gtg Val	463

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gcc gcc gat Ala Ala Asp 225	ccc cgc gtt ca Pro Arg Val Hi 230	c gtc tgc s Val Cys	cag gtc gcc a Gln Val Ala 1 235	Ile Ala Asp (	ggg 779 Sly 240
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								gag Glu								489
								aac Asn								537
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Lys	ccc Pro 145	tcg Ser	gag Glu	atg Met	gac Asp	atg Met 150	ggc Gly	gac Asp	atc Ile	<b>t</b> tc Phe	ggc Gly 155	ctt Leu	acc Thr	gcg Ala	ccg Pro	4	79
cgc Arg 160	gcc Ala	acg Thr	cgg Arg	ctc Leu	tac Tyr 165	gcc Ala	gtg Val	cct Pro	acg Thr	ccc Pro 170	Arg	ctc Leu	aac Asn	tgc Cys	ccc Pro 175	5	27
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3	Arg	~3.,	20 Two	212	Dro	LOU	Dro		Gly	Pro	Luc	Pro		Pro	Tle	
Arg	Arg	35	гур	Ala	PLO	Leu	40	FIO	GIA	110	Lys	45	Dea			
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Ile Leu Asp Thr Ser Val Tyr Pro Arg Glu Pro Glu Ser Met Lys Glu
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Lys Lys Thr Met Glu Ile Gly Val Tyr Thr Gly Tyr Ser Leu Leu Ala
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Thr Ala Leu Ala Leu Pro Glu Asp Gly Thr Ile Leu Ala Met Asp Ile
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## INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 6:		(11) International Publication Number: WO 99/10498
C12N 15/52, 15/82, 15/11, 5/14, C12P 21/02, C12N 9/00, A01H 5/00	A3	(43) International Publication Date: 4 March 1999 (04.03.99)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98	9 (74) Agents: RAN, David, B. et al.; Darwin Building, 7100 N.W. 62nd Avenue, Johnston, IA 50131-1000 (US).	
(22) International Filing Date: 24 August 1998 (24	1.08.9	3)
(30) Priority Data: 60/057,082 27 August 1997 (27.08.97) 09/076,851 12 May 1998 (12.05.98)  (63) Related by Continuation (CON) or Continuation-in-l (CIP) to Earlier Applications US 60/057,08: Filed on 27 August 1997 (27 US 09/076,85 Filed on 12 May 1998 (12	Part 32 (CII 7.08.9'	7) IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
<ul> <li>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): PIC HI-BRED INTERNATIONAL, INC. [US/US]; 800 Square, 400 Locust Street, Des Moines, IA 50309 (IC) Inventors; and</li> <li>(72) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): HELENTJARIS, T. G. [US/US]; 2960 N.W. 73rd Lane, Ankeny, IA (US). BOWEN, Benjamin, A. [GB/US]; 3008 36th Des Moines, IA 50310 (US). WANG, Xun [CN/US] Highland Oaks Drive, Johnston, IA 50131 (US).</li> </ul>	Capit (US). (Imoth 5002 h Stree	Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.  (88) Date of publication of the international search report:  2 September 1999 (02.09.99)

#### (57) Abstract

The present invention provides methods and compositions relating to altering lignin biosynthesis content and/or composition of plants. The invention provides isolated nucleic acids and their encoded proteins which are involved in lignin biosynthesis. The invention further provides recombinant expression cassettes, host cells, transgenic plants, and antibody compositions.

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International Application No PCT/US 98/17519

A CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 C12N15/52 C12N15/82

C12N9/00

A01H5/00

C12N15/11 C12N5/14 C12P21/02

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

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C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Р,Х	WO 98 03535 A (CHAPPLE CLINTON C S ; PURDUE RESEARCH FOUNDATION (US)) 29 January 1998 see the whole document	1-12,18, 20-26
P,X	WO 97 45549 A ((CENTR NAT RECH SCIENT;AGRONOMIQUE INST RECH (FR);FAYE,LOIC)) 4 December 1997 see the whole document	1-5, 7-12,18, 20, 22-24,26
X	WO 97 23599 A (DU PONT ; PURDUE RESEARCH FOUNDATION (US); CHAPPLE CLINT (US)) 3 July 1997 see the whole document	1-12,18, 20-26

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Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
16 July 1999	2 2. 07. <b>99</b>
Name and mailing address of the ISA  European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentiaan 2  NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer  Hillenbrand, G



International Application No PCT/US 98/17519

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DATABASE EMBL/GENBANK/DDBJ Accession number D42011, 14 November 1994 SASAKI, T. ET AL.: "Rice cDNA, partial sequence" XP002101416 72.8% identity in 254bp overlap with SEQ ID NO:22 (total 1269bp). 86.1% identity in 352bp overlap with SEQ ID NO:78 (total 2230bp).	1-5, 7-12,18, 20, 22-24,26
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#### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US 98/17519

Box I	Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)
This Inte	emational Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:
1.	Claims Nos.: because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. X	Claims Nos.: 13-17, 19 because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:  See FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3.	Claims Nos.: because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).
Box II	Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of Item 2 of first sheet)
This Int	ernational Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:
Se	ee additional sheet
1. X	As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2.	As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3.	As only some of the required additional search lees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. [	No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
Remar	k on Protest  X  The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
	No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.
I	





information on patent family members

toternational Application No PCT/US 98/17519

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